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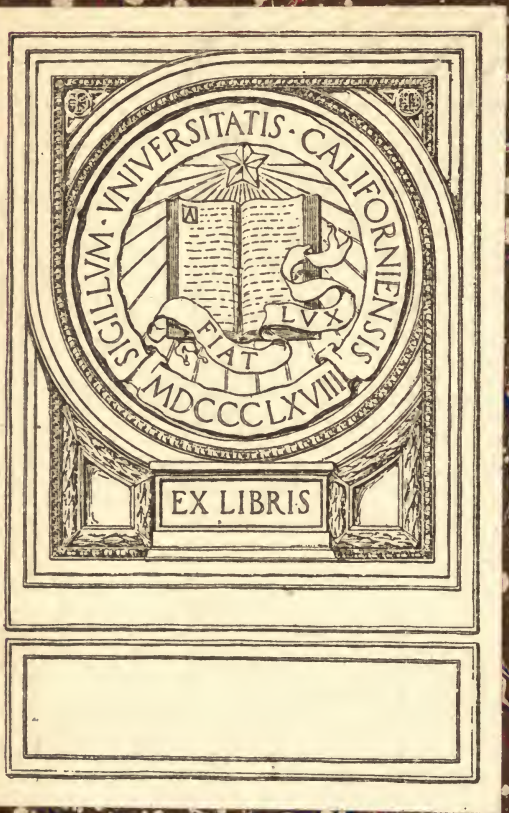
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THE

LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK,

MAJOR-GENERAL, U. S. A.

By FREDERICK E. GOODRICH.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

HON. FREDERICK O. PRINCE,

Mayor of the City of Boston, and Secretary of the National Democratic Committee.

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TO THE PEOPLE

OF A REUNITED COUNTRY

THIS STORY OF

A PATRIOTIC LIFE

IS DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

To tell the story of the life of a successful general is to recite a romance. Hard and cruel as the work of war may be in reality, it is only while it is doing that its hardships and its roughnesses are seen. When it is done, the glory of the result smooths the crudenesses, and gilds the dark places, and rounds the whole into a picturesque completeness. The love of conflict is as much a part of human nature as the love of peace; and delight in tales of war lies deep down in man's heart. Stories of heroes and of saints, of warfare temporal and spiritual, form the earliest literature of mankind.

But when to this is added the element of patriotism, and the successful warrior is one who fights not alone for glory or for the love of fighting, but for the love of country, a new zest is given the chronicle of his deeds. And when, still further, this love of country is the love of a free, popular government, — when the struggle is for the sake of liberty and for maintaining the will of the people, — the soldier in such a cause becomes a hero, whether successful or not.

The subject of this sketch is such a hero, and a most successful one. But, great as is his glory in war, the impartial historian will accord him at least equal honor for the display of rare administrative talent in civil affairs, — most rare, indeed, in connection with such superlative military genius as he has shown.

In writing the life of this patriot, soldier, and statesman, the only embarrassment is that of a superabundance of material. His life has been one long romance of duty well performed, filled with adventure, with great deeds, and with noble actions. To select from the history of the American Republic during the past forty years such facts as may show the part which General Hancock has taken in the work of making and saving our country is the purpose of the writer of this volume. Much has to be left untold in the limits of a work of this sort. It is sought simply to show the man as he appears in the history of his country.

In collecting facts for this work, especial care has been taken to secure absolute authenticity; and the author acknowledges his indebtedness to the courtesy of Hon. B. E. Chain and Hon. B. M. Boyer, of Norristown, Penn., intimate companions of the boy Winfield and trusted friends of the General; to Gen. William B. Franklin, Gen. St. Clair A. Mulholland, Gen. George H. Gordon, Hon. George L. Thorndike, and others of his companions in arms; to Townsend Ward, Esq., Secretary of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and to many others. The story of General Hancock's public services is chiefly taken from the official reports and documents of Congress and the War Department; and, among unofficial sources, from Moore's "Record of the Rebellion," Greeley's "American Conflict," and Swinton's "Army of the Potomac" and "Twelve Great Battles."

F. E. G.

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE,
BOSTON, July 15, 1880

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INTRODUCTION.

No history of the great civil war can be written without reciting the brilliant military record of Major-General Winfield Scott Hancock. Educated in the military art at West Point, trained in the application of military principles to practice in the Mexican war, where he was brevetted for gallant and meritorious conduct, he had attained the age and the experience which make an accomplished soldier, at the commencement of what proved to be the greatest and most terrible war of ancient or modern times.

His gallantry and skill were shown on many of the hardest fought battle-fields, — at Williamsburg, Frazer's Farm, South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Spottsylvania Court House, North Anna, the second battle of Cold Harbor, and the operations around Petersburg. It may be said that he took a prominent part in every important battle fought in the East, and thus largely contributed to the success of our arms and the restoration of the Union of the States.

The fame of this distinguished commander is secure. It is recognized not only by his grateful countrymen,

but in all lands where military talent and genius are appreciated, and courage, fortitude, and the martial virtues recognized and honored. There is, and can be, no question of his rank as a great soldier. None challenge it. His title is clear, certain, and indisputable. Time, which levels so much and qualifies so often and so largely the claims of the great men of history, will never disturb his right to the niche in the temple of fame accorded to him by his contemporaries. His military services have been so recently rendered, that their mention is not necessary for the information of his countrymen, for they know them by heart. But there is a part of his life and history not shown in his public record, nor in his achievements on the battle-field, which the people must now desire to know; as the great Democratic party — the party which the eloquent Choate declared, "bore the national flag and kept step to the music of the Union" — has, through its representatives, unanimously nominated him as its candidate for the Presidency. They know him as the brave, brilliant, and successful soldier; but they have had no opportunities to learn the other sides of his character, nor those many qualities of head and heart which largely led to his nomination, and which eminently fit him for the discharge of the duties of the great office to which he will undoubtedly be elected in November next. To supply the popular demand for

such information, it has been proposed to give, in the pages which follow, a brief sketch of the private as well as public life of this distinguished citizen.

It will be generally conceded that there is a growing objection in the public mind to military candidates for the Presidency. This feeling doubtless comes from fear of the repetition of the cases, with which history bristles, of usurpation by successful soldiers of the executive power to the overthrow of constitutional government. Nor is it surprising that these usurpations occur. In war, the laws are silent; and the soldier, substituting his will as authority, recognizes no instrument for the attainment of his objects but force. When war ceases, he naturally submits with reluctance to a return to the methods of the civil power for administering government, and if his army is devoted to him, the temptation to seize upon power is often too great for resistance. Whether in this age of popular intelligence, and with a people possessed of ample means for combination and resistance to a *coup d'état*, all such apprehension is to be deemed groundless, it will not be necessary now to consider. In the case of General Hancock, the objection that he is a soldier must dissipate, for his honest and patriotic conduct after the surrender of Lee and the termination of the war, in recognizing the rights of our citizens under the Constitution, showed most conclusively that he had no

disposition, if he had the power, to act the *rôle* of the conqueror: that Washington, the Father of his Country, and not Napoleon, was his inspiration and guide. There is nothing nobler or more sublime in history than the conduct of this hero of a hundred battles, on the occasion referred to. His letter to Governor Pease, of Texas, in 1868, when commanding the Fifth Military District, wherein he completely subordinates the military to the civil power in time of peace, will alone render his name illustrious and forever dear to all who love civil liberty. When the judgment of mankind shall be elevated and refined by a higher civilization, so that it shall the more truly adjust the claims of its benefactors to the rewards of heroic conduct, this patriotic surrender of the great soldier to the supremacy of the civil law will add more to his fame than all his great military achievements.

Let it be remembered that the action of General Hancock was in opposition to his official superiors at Washington, who for political and partisan purposes wished to keep the South under military control, with no rights that a Republican was bound to respect. Let it be remembered that he imperilled his official and professional life by this sacred respect for right and patriotic regard for law, and our admiration augments, and we feel that whatever fear of detriment to the Republic might obtain, should any other of our successful

generals become President, there could be no danger in placing him in the chair once occupied by Washington, who had shown himself possessed of equal moderation, and equal respect for the Constitution and the laws of the country.

It is a curious fact that, notwithstanding the supposed popular distrust of military men for Presidents, so large a number should have been elected to this high office: Washington, Monroe, Jackson, Harrison, Taylor, Pierce, Grant, and Hayes were all soldiers, and were mostly selected as candidates because of their military record. When we consider the functions and duties of the executive, it would seem that a soldier, accomplished in his art, would be eminently fitted for the discharge of these duties; and, but for the popular apprehension before alluded to, the military qualities, instead of being an objection, would be regarded as a qualification in a supreme magistrate.

There is this advantage in favor of selecting Presidents from the military profession. They are not as likely to be committed to any partisanship touching political questions, beyond a general endorsement of the principles of the party to which they adhere. Their professional position keeps them outside of party feuds and dissensions, and enables them to take broader and, as it were, more judicial views of political questions and measures than those laymen who, to

become sufficiently prominent to be candidates for the high office, must make politics a profession.

In applying this observation to General Hancock, we might observe that, while he endorses the platform of principles adopted by the Cincinnati Convention and approves the general policy of the Democratic party in respect to the important issues of the campaign, in doing so he is not called to modify previous opinions inconsistent with these principles, nor explain any former action antagonistic thereto. He will enter upon the discharge of the great trust which the people will commit to him in March, free of all obligations, and relieved of every influence which might embarrass or fetter him. He has been always noted for his energy, industry, perseverance, fortitude, and patience. His intelligence, good judgment and sagacity are well-known. His knowledge of men has been conspicuously shown in the selection of his staff officers, as he has always surrounded himself with able assistants who well understood the work wanted from them. We are warranted in believing from his action in this respect that, should he become President, he will call to his aid cabinet advisers who will know their duty and be competent to discharge it. Right men will be put in the right places. The public interests will not suffer through official appointments made for political service only, nor will the country be longer

disgraced by the swarms of bummers who for years have infested every department of the government.

In looking through the life of General Hancock, we find, from the time he left West Point Academy, during all his military career, in war and in peace, he has exhibited peculiar aptitude for the duties of an executive officer. Possessing in an eminent degree what is termed "character," his official conduct seems to have been always guided by fixed principles. He first seeks to find what duty requires in the matter before him, and, this ascertained, he enters at once upon the performance of the requisition. Without doubt, the nature of the military profession fosters and develops this habit of mind. We may say that he is eminently a man of convictions, with the courage of his convictions; but not obstinate in temper, nor unyielding, if good reasons be shown for a change of opinion. He is in every respect a most available candidate. There is nothing in his record which we are called to defend. We can abandon our shields in this contest, for we have no use for them. He is popular with all sections. His nomination satisfies equally the North and the South. He has united into a compact body a divided Democracy, and so acceptable is he to large numbers of our political opponents that we find Independent Republican Hancock organizations springing up in nearly all the States.

We have spoken of him as certain to be elected, not only because this seems to be the general conviction, but because we feel that since such happy results would follow his election, it must occur that the fitness of things may be maintained. With General Hancock as President of the United States, all the hideous past would be buried forever. Demagogues would cease their devilish work of keeping the sections hostile by rekindling sectional animosities. Amity and fraternal regard would make us again one people. The era of good feeling would return, and the issue settled by war, "an indestructible union of indestructible States," everywhere recognized.

FREDERICK O. PRINCE.

Boston, July 12, 1880.

WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK.

PART I.

BOY AND MAN.

CHAPTER I.

The Hancock Family. — Its Services in the War of the Revolution. — Marriage of Benjamin F. Hancock and Settlement in Norristown, Penn. — Early Struggles of the Young Couple. — School-Teaching and Law. — Education of the Twins, Winfield and Hilary. — Character and Public Services of the Father of General Hancock.

EARLY in the year 1828, a little family moved into the village of Norristown, Penn., from the farming country near by, and set up their modest household. This family consisted of Benjamin F. Hancock, his wife Elizabeth, and their twin sons. The boys, Winfield Scott Hancock and Hilary B. Hancock, were at that time four years old.

Both father and mother came of the farming families of Montgomery County. Their English ancestors had lived upon the soil in the old country; their fathers and grandfathers had found more bountiful subsistence in the cultivation of the broad meadows along the Schuylkill and the rich intervales of the new land which they had possessed and made free; Benjamin F. Hancock was himself a farmer; Elizabeth Hexworth was a farmer's daughter.

It was a sturdy, patriotic stock, and it flourished in a section crowded with patriotic memories. Germantown, Brandywine, Valley Forge, Paoli, are names indissolubly associated with the history of our struggle

for independence as a Republic; and it was among the associations clustering about these places that the Hancock family grew up.

These associations, too, were interwoven with their family history. The grandfather of Elizabeth Hancock was one of the patriot farmers of the Revolution. He won and honorably carried a captain's commission in Washington's army, and gave his life for his country, dying of the effect of hardships and privations in the field shortly after he saw the land made free for his children. Her father, Edward Hexworth, although a boy in his teens, also joined the patriot army, and fought by the side of his father, returning to enjoy the fruits of the liberty for which he had given his youthful strength and enthusiasm. He attained great age, dying Jan. 29, 1847, upwards of 90 years old. Benjamin F. Hancock's father, Richard Hancock, was a mariner. He was captured at sea, and, with so many other patriots, was given the choice of service against his country in the British navy, or consignment to the notorious Dartmoor Prison, whose name was a terror. He chose the patriot's part, and did not pass the double barricades of that melancholy enclosure until the close of the war. On his release, he returned to free America. In the war of 1812, when the British advanced their troops as far as Red Bank, and the safety of Philadelphia and all the towns in that section was threatened, Benjamin F. Hancock himself, then a mere lad, made one of the local company that garrisoned Camp Dupont.

This was the family whose youngest members took

up their residence in Norristown in 1828. It was good stock, — of the people, of the soil; it had the traditions of earnest patriotism and honest labor; with neither crest nor pedigree, it held a place in the peerage of the Republic.

Benjamin F. Hancock, although born in Philadelphia, was brought up as a farmer; and it was while farming in the country near Montgomeryville that he paid his suit to Elizabeth Hexworth, a farmer's daughter, and won her for his wife. Even at the time of his marriage he had aspirations for a different career, and with quiet earnestness he set himself to accomplish it. He had no means of his own; his support, and that of his family, was the income that his own labor brought him. Farmer Hexworth was a man of moderate property, comfortably well off, but not of wealth sufficient to endow his daughter on her marriage. Indeed, such was not the custom among the farmers of Pennsylvania. The man who took upon himself the responsibilities of marriage was expected to know his ability to provide for his own. So the young couple set out in life dependent upon themselves, confident and brave. The husband, whose education was above the average, turned his talent to account in teaching a country school. The wife attended to domestic duties.

Then the children came; and, under his increasing responsibilities, the father was impelled to push forward more rapidly in the career which he had marked out for himself. His ambition was not great; but his purpose was steady: it was to place his children in a better position for starting in life than he had occupied.

This it was that led him to remove to Norristown, where there were opportunities for advancing himself and for educating his boys.

In Norristown, with their young family, Benjamin Hancock and his wife began their new life in a most modest way. They were poor; but they both had confidence in themselves. The husband continued to teach school in Norristown, and meantime studied law in the office of John Friedley, Esq. The wife, who was a true helpmeet, bravely took her share in the work of supporting the family, and opened a milliner's store in the house; turning her talent, taste, and dexterity to the best account in aid of her hard-working husband. Benjamin F. Hancock was admitted to the Montgomery County bar at Norristown, Aug. 19, 1828; and, long after this, the wife continued her occupation as milliner in pleasant rooms on one side of the house, while the husband carried on his law business in his office on the opposite side.

The Hancock family prospered, as they must have prospered with such earnest endeavor. Another son was born. The father was appointed justice of the peace; and, while yet young, he began to receive proofs of the confidence and respect of his fellow-citizens, which naturally followed from his upright life. He was a quiet, unassuming man, of sterling ability and great integrity. In his profession he was a counsellor, rather than a barrister; and he was much sought for such business. Many were the trusts committed to his hands; his character for uprightness standing high even in a borough whose lawyers have a proverbial

reputation for honesty, and his strong good sense finding recognition from all his fellow-citizens.

One matter in which he took a special and active interest was public education. When he established himself in Norristown, the free-school system was not known in the State. Squire Hancock thoroughly believed in the system, — not as a pedagogue, but as a practical man who had himself taught children, and who had children of his own to educate. He was an earnest promoter of free public schools; and, when the school law was passed, he devoted his energies at once to the work of securing its advantages for his town, and accomplished as much as any other man in the formation and arrangement of the school system in Norristown. His own boys, whom he was educating at a private academy in the town, were taken out, and sent to the public schools; and by example as well as by labor he urged the development of the system. From 1836 until his death, a period of thirty-one years, he was a prominent and active member of the School Board of Norristown.

Mr. Hancock was further honored by the appointment as Collector of Internal Revenue by President Johnson, — a position which he held at the time of his death. He lived to see his son Hilary established in his own profession as a practising lawyer, his son John a colonel of volunteers in the war of the Rebellion, and Winfield wearing the stars of a major-general in the United States army. He died on the 1st of February, 1867, leaving to his children as the chief part of their inheritance the example of an honorable, Christian life. Mrs. Hancock survived her husband twelve years.

CHAPTER II.

Birth and Boyhood. — His Name, and its Influence upon his Career. — The School-boys' Train-band. — Captain Winfield. — The Champion of the Weak. — Anecdotes of his School-days. — How he Met a Schoolmate in after Years.

Winfield Scott Hancock, son of Benjamin F. and Elizabeth Hancock, was born near Montgomeryville, Penn., on the 14th of February, 1824. His name was given him, not because of any relationship with the general who at that time held so high a popularity, but from admiration of the man. The Hancock family, on both the father's and the mother's side, had military traditions; and the influence of this may have had its effect in the choice of a name for one of the twin boys who came to the young couple that February day in the little farm-house in Montgomery County.

There is much in a name, especially when associated with hereditary tendencies; and it can hardly be doubted that in this case the career of the young Pennsylvanian was in some degree determined by the name which he bore. It is, of course, natural to expect that, after the development of such exceptional military genius in the man, incidents of his boyhood should be recalled which seem to show that the bent of his mind was always in that direction. General Hancock's friends and school-mates tell with peculiar zest of the school-boy militia that used to train under his captain-

ship. They describe the wooden muskets with tin bayonets, the paper hats, and the home-made uniforms and flags, that distinguished their soldiery, and recount the parades and the drills in which they participated under the budding commander of thousands.

But it may be considered doubtful whether young Hancock really had any more than the usual boyish fondness for military display. One fact, however, is quite evident; and this is, that even at an early age he showed the talent for leadership which developed to such a remarkable degree in the man. He was not only the captain of the school-boys' train-band, but the leader in sports, the chosen referee in boyish disputes. It was the frequent course, in case of a difference between the boys, for them to "leave it out to Winfield." And Winfield usually settled it with expedition, and with a good deal of sound common-sense. Gray-headed members of that juvenile militia company now relate with a chuckle — as illustrating Winfield's readiness in an emergency — how he quelled insubordination that threatened to become a mutiny, by ordering the ringleaders to report at home to their mothers. Discipline was restored at once.

The boy Winfield was tall and slim, with no indications of his present figure; and, indeed, he retained this physique until after he returned from the war. He was sound in body, mind, and morals; for his home was a Christian one, and all the influences about the household of the Hancocks were wholesome and manly. One of his distinguishing traits was an entire absence of fear in doing what he considered his duty. He

would tolerate no bullying of the smaller boys when he was about. As one of his school-mates says, "If a big boy undertook to worry a small boy, he'd find Winfield atop of him in short order."

Another story runs thus: There was a tumult among the boys returning home from school one day, just in front of Lawyer Hancock's office. The scuffle developed into a stand-up fight between two of the youngsters, which brought Mr. Hancock to his office door, as he recognized Winfield in one of the combatants.

"Come here, my son," called the father, in his invariably calm manner.

The boy walked directly up to the office door, and with flushed face looked his father straight in the eye.

"What is the matter, Winfield?" asked Mr. Hancock.

"That big boy tried to whip me," was the reply, "and I wasn't going to let him."

"But he is a great deal larger than you, my son."

"I know he is, father; but I can't let him whip me."

The boy's persistence in his purpose of establishing the principle of equality had, however, to yield to the paternal judgment of the fitness of things, and the combat was closed then and there.

Reverence for parental authority was a characteristic of young Hancock, and so was filial affection. His mother — whom he venerated through life, and deeply mourned when death removed her to rest beside her husband and General Hancock's only daughter in the quiet cemetery of Norristown — used to relate with happy pride an incident in point. It was when the twins

were yet young that one evening she was left alone by the necessary absence of the father on public business until a late hour. She was engaged on some household work; but she noticed that she was never alone. When bedtime came for the twins, one of them went, the other remained. After the lapse of an hour, the one who had been sitting quietly with her left the room, and the other came in to take his place. She found that the little fellows had, of their own motion, decided that mother was not to be left to sit up alone all that long evening, and had organized a watch to keep her company. One was to sit up the first hour; the other, the next; and so on.

Those who knew General Hancock as a boy speak always of his generosity as a leading trait in his character. There was nothing mean about him. He was thoughtful for others before himself. He always wanted his friends to share what good fortune he had, — to have as good as he had himself. This trait remained with him throughout his career, and won for him stanch friends in whatever station he found himself placed.

There is a story told which in a measure illustrates this quality, although its most curious interest is found in its sequel. A poor little orphan boy came to Norristown when Winfield was about eleven years old, sent there at the death of his parents to be cared for by distant relatives. Winfield, in a manner, took the little fellow under his protection. He was the youngest and the smallest boy in the school which they both attended, and was consequently on occasion the butt of those who were inclined to bully or tease. Young Hancock was

already developing into a manly boy, and he stood between his little *protegé* and his persecutors, fought his battles for him, made a place for him among the others, and divided with him his not very lavish supply of pocket-money in those treats which school-boys delight in. This little fellow left Norristown as poor as he had come into it, going to Philadelphia to work for his own living as soon as he had passed the dependent age, and reaching that city with only one cent in his pocket. But he was fortunate in finding work, and he worked so well at his trade, carpentering, that before long he was at the head of a gang of men; and, to make a long story short, in the course of years he accumulated wealth, and, going into politics, was elected a member of the city council. During the same years, Winfield had also grown to man's estate, and made his own career in another field; and it was the little forsaken fellow whom he had befriended in his school-days, who, in the city government of Philadelphia, introduced the resolutions of thanks and welcome to Major-Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, in the name of the city, and offering him the use of the historic Independence Hall for a reception on his visit to Philadelphia. The chances of life had brought again into immediate association John W. Everman and Winfield S. Hancock, through paths so widely separated since the Norristown school-days, It was Everman, too, who, as chairman of the committee of the city government, presented the engrossed resolutions to his former school-mate and champion.

These recollections of the early boyhood of Winfield

HANCOCK'S EARLY HOME, NORRISTOWN, PA.

Scott Hancock are cherished as precious memories at his old home in the Schuylkill Valley; having little value, indeed, in themselves, but serving to bring into closer sympathy the hero whom a united country honors, with the people from whom he came and one of whom he is.

CHAPTER III.

One of Winfield Hancock's Chums. — His Home Life. — A Student in Norristown Academy. — The Baptist Sunday-School. — A Cadet at West Point. — How he was Appointed. — His Class-mates. — Courtship and Marriage. — Birth of Children. — Honors received.

Among the intimate friends of General Hancock's school-boy days was Hon. B. E. Chain, now one of the leading lawyers of the Montgomery County bar. The friendship, which began in boyhood, has continued even to the present day; Mr. Chain having had the settlement of the elder Hancock's estate, and in other ways giving the General and his family the benefit of his legal knowledge and business ability. A more vivid picture of General Hancock as a youth cannot be found in brief space than that which Mr. Chain gives in his own words, as follows:—

"I have known him for over forty years, and, boy and man, am glad to claim him as a friend. In 1828 he came from Montgomery township, near Montgomeryville, about ten miles from here, to this town, with his father and mother and twin brother, Hilary. He was then about four years old. The family went to reside in a two-story stone house, still standing, but very dilapidated. This house at that time was one mile west of the town, on the old Ridge pike. It is now in the city limits, near the cemetery. He first went to school to Eliphalet Roberts, in the academy, which then stood where the present market-house stands.

"From my earliest acquaintance with him, we boys acknowledged him as a kind of a leader. He was quiet, but firm, in all he undertook. I remember that his tastes earlier ran in a soldierly direction. He used to get us boys back of the academy, and, improvising cocked hats of paper and guns and swords of sticks, put us through all manner of manœuvres, that to our boyish ideas were the acme of military perfection.

"At that time his father was in poor circumstances, and it was a struggle for him to gain sustenance for his family. As business improved in his profession as a lawyer, he moved into town, and occupied a three-story brick house on Swede Street, close to Lafayette Street, having his office in a small brick building adjoining. Winfield and his brother, Hilary, at that time looked so much alike that it was hard to distinguish one from the other across the street.

"His father and mother were Baptists of the strictest school, and kept their children in their earlier years under the most rigid moral training. The consequence was, that up to the time Winfield went to West Point he had no vices. He was then in his seventeenth year, was tall for his age, but very slender.

"He never forgot his old friends; and after he graduated he would visit them at times, never assuming any superiority, but on the footing established in the boyhood days. His life after leaving West Point has become historical, and needs no repetition from me. With regard to his religious predilections, he is not connected with any denomination. While the General was quite young, his father and mother connected themselves with the Baptists in this town; and the General, then a small boy, attended the Sunday-school of that church, his father being the superintendent."

The attachment of General Hancock for his boy-

hood's home was equally sincere. Soon after he assumed command of the Military Division of the Atlantic, he remarked to a friend, "Now, if the government will only remove my headquarters to Philadelphia, I shall be able to realize the desire of my heart by making my residence in Norristown, the home of my childhood." This was not to be; but if General Hancock could have witnessed the universal joy that pervaded Norristown, without regard to party, when the news was received there of his nomination to the presidency by the Democratic convention at Cincinnati, he would have realized how fully his feelings were reciprocated, and how proudly his native town watched the brilliant career of the stripling youth whom it had sent forth.

Along the streets, in all public places, in private offices, everywhere in and about the town, party feeling was laid aside, and general rejoicing prevailed. Five hundred guns were fired, the town was illuminated in the evening, and the whole population turned out at an impromptu ratification meeting. Old men, who had almost reached the allotted "threescore years and ten," forgot political strife as they shook hands, and discussed their boyish recollections of "Winfield Hancock." It was no longer General Hancock to them, but old Ben Hancock's boy, "Winfield." The old two-story stone house near the Montgomery cemetery, that has been in so dilapidated a condition for years that it has not been habitable, where General Hancock's childhood days were spent, became at once a place of importance; and during the day not a few who had passed

it for years without giving a thought to the old structure stopped to gaze upon it.

Young Hancock received the best education that his parents could provide for him; and he improved his opportunities. He was placed at school in the Norristown Academy, where Eliphalet Roberts was his first teacher. When the public school system was adopted, his father being one of the promoters of the system, and also actively engaged in carrying out its operations as one of the school board of Norristown, he was sent to a free school.

He was a studious boy, and a bright one; and, as early as his fifteenth year, he was selected to read the Declaration of Independence on the occasion of the public celebration of the anniversary.

In the year 1840, when he was sixteen, Winfield Scott Hancock received the appointment to the Military Academy at West Point. It was the natural course for the career of a boy who, by descent, by family tradition, and by native preference, had a military bent. The profession of arms was one to which he inevitably tended. The appointment was made by Hon. Joseph Fornance, at that time representing the district in Congress. Mr. Fornance was a friend of young Hancock's father, respected him as a citizen and as a man, knew his struggle to educate his boys properly, and saw also in Winfield the evidence of a spirit and ability that would do credit to the country under the training of the Military School.

But there is a curious story of the way in which the appointment was brought about, which, whether it is

true or a fable, at least illustrates how comparatively small incidents may turn the course of events unexpectedly to great results.

This story goes that at that time there lived in Montgomery County an ex-member of Congress, whose taste for political management, as well as his large experience in public affairs, gave him great influence. He was a lawyer and a bachelor; and, in place of a family on which to lavish his affection, he gave it all to his profession, to politics, and to a remarkably fine horse, which he rode on all his errands of business or pleasure over the country. In course of time, the horse grew old and stiff, and, to provide his favorite with a comfortable maintenance in his age, the lawyer presented him to a professional friend in Philadelphia, with the understanding that he was to be used only for light family work, and to be well cared for. Going to Philadelphia some time after, the lawyer recognized in an overloaded dray horse, beaten by a cruel driver, the pet animal that he had consigned to the care of his friend. He at once bought his old horse, and took him back to Montgomery County.

Now, it so happened that the Philadelphia friend, who had so violated friendship and decency by selling the gift of the Montgomery County lawyer, to be abused, contrary to their understanding, had a son for whom he wished an appointment as cadet at West Point. Knowing that there was a vacancy in Congressman Fornance's district, he removed part of his family into Montgomery County, for the purpose of securing the appointment as a resident of the district; and such

were the influences he brought to bear that he would probably have succeeded, but for the indignation of the owner of the horse, whose confidence he had betrayed. The latter, as a manner of getting even with him, threw all his influence in favor of the appointment of young Hancock, and was successful.

This is one of the stories of the region, in relating which, as it may have little foundation in fact, we have omitted all mention of names. It is on the whole more probable that Hon. Joseph Fornance, who knew and respected Benjamin F. Hancock, both as a lawyer and a citizen, needed no extraordinary inducement or influence to appoint his son, so promising a youth, to the vacancy at West Point.

The period at which Hancock was at West Point was prolific of distinguished graduates. Among his fellow-cadets whose names have become familiar to every American citizen, and are known, indeed, through the whole world, were George B. McClellan, U. S. Grant, John F. Reynolds (who fell on the first day at Gettysburg), J. L. Reno (who fell at South Mountain), William B. Franklin, Burnside, "Baldy" Smith, Pleasanton, Ord, "Stonewall" Jackson, Longstreet, the two Hills, and others. Hancock was esteemed at West Point, as he had been at home, and developed military talent of the first order. Here it was that he first saw and conversed with Gen. Winfield Scott, for whom he was named; and it is said that the veteran soldier found much to commend in the stripling cadet. It cannot be doubted that his bearing such a name had much to do with inspiring Hancock in his career, as it had with his choice of a profession.

The character of the boy strengthened and developed under the discipline of West Point and amid the competitors that he there had, and he took high rank as a scholar, graduating eighteenth in a large class on the 30th of June, 1844, when he received his commission as Brevet Second Lieutenant in the Sixth Infantry.

Of his military career and services, so brilliant and so great, we shall next speak. It was while he was serving as adjutant of his regiment, then stationed at St. Louis, before he had attained full rank as First Lieutenant, although he had been brevetted for gallantry in the Mexican war, that he married Miss Russell, the daughter of a prominent merchant of St. Louis, in 1850. The fruit of this union was two children, — a son, Russell, named after Mrs. Hancock's father; and a daughter, who died at the age of eighteen, several years ago, and was buried in the family lot in the Norristown cemetery. Russell Hancock is married, and lives on his plantation, about one hundred miles below Memphis.

Since his commission in the United States army, General Hancock has had no home except where duty called him. Once or twice he has hired a house and fitted it up for occupancy, expecting a residence of considerable length. But the inexorable orders of the War Department have compelled him to break up housekeeping, and remove perhaps a thousand miles to take charge of a different command. There is no home-life for one in the service, except what a congenial family can give; and this, it may be said, has been

General Hancock's good fortune since the day when he, as a young lieutenant, plighted vows with Miss Russell at St. Louis. He has ever been a servant of his country; doing his duty faithfully and with honor in every station, whether of danger or of wearisome labor, to which he was called. He early learned to obey; he quickly showed his power to command. As a man, he proved himself upright and honorable; as a citizen, he showed himself stanchly patriotic under all circumstances. As a soldier, his name is one of the brightest on our roll of heroes. In the course of his career, he became the recipient of a service of plate from the citizens of Pennsylvania, of a sword from the United States Sanitary Commission of St. Louis, and of the official thanks, not only of the city of Philadelphia, but — the most distinguished honor that could be conferred — of the Congress of the United States.

WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK

PART II.

THE SOLDIER.

CHAPTER I.

Lieutenant Hancock enters the Sixth Infantry.— His Service on the Plains.— Protecting the Advance Guard of White Settlers.— The Outbreak of the Mexican War.— Hancock's Request to be ordered to the Front.— He is sent to Mexico.— His first Experience under Fire at Contreras and San Antonio.— He begins to make a Record.

Lieutenant Hancock entered the army from West Point, well qualified to develop, under favorable circumstances, the great talents which he then possessed in embryo, and also having within his breast a noble ambition to make his name worthy of the parents who had reared and taught him. The characteristics which have since made him one of the foremost men in the land were even at that time apparent. He was earnest, industrious, conscientious, and strongly patriotic. He sought duty for the sake of doing it well, and he shirked nothing which came to him in the path of his profession. The effects of his early training in the Norristown home remained with him, keeping him honest, sincere, and true to himself. Cadet-life at West Point had not obliterated the home influence, and he went into the army with a fresh heart and an earnest purpose.

On the 1st of July, 1844, he received his brevet Second Lieutenancy, in the Sixth Infantry, and was ordered to report to his command in the Indian Territory. The Sixth Regiment was then stationed in the

Far West, in the region of the Washita or Red River. It was here that he served his novitiate. Settlers near the Indian Territory were then, as now, subject to frequent alarms; but at that time, the Indians being vastly more numerous, the country comparatively vacant of white residents and means of communication almost nothing, they were much more at the mercy of the savage raiders. The army of the United States was almost entirely occupied with the protection of the advance-line of settlers as it slowly pushed its way across the continent, each year hearing the axe's ring further in the western forest, and seeing the rich prairie soil turned in furrows nearer to the setting sun.

Hostile tribes were numerous and active; and in place of the occasional outbreaks at the more distant points of our unsettled territory, which now occur, the whole line of the pioneers' advance was constantly threatened.

There was no glory to be gained by service in this section. It was the drudgery of army life, one day differing from another by little which can be called incident. But it is now, as it was in 1844, the school of practice to which West Point graduates are sent to familiarize themselves with the practical workings of the theories learned at the Academy.

Lieutenant Hancock was for a time stationed at Fort Towson, on the Red River of the South, and was then transferred to Fort Washita, at that time our most western military station. It was here that, on the 18th of June, 1846, he received his commission as full Second Lieutenant.

In the mean time, the diplomatic difficulties between the United States and Mexico had developed into open war. Taylor had made an entrance into the territory of the Montezumas, and his brilliant victories had aroused the war-spirit throughout the land. Lieutenant Hancock had been sent eastward from the Red River territory — although the point to which he was ordered was then considered far west — and was engaged in the recruiting service at Newport Barracks, Ky. He chafed under this restraint while the bugles were calling across the border; for he had the spirit of the true soldier, which permits no contentment in inactivity when his country calls for aid. And when President Polk's administration determined to push the war to a conclusion, and in November, 1846, ordered General Scott to take command and finish the conflict, Hancock could wait no longer, but made formal application to the War Department to be sent to the front. A letter to his twin brother, written about this time, gives a brief expression of his feelings.

NEWPORT BARRACKS, KY., May 5, 1847.

MY DEAR HILARY:— I was exceedingly glad to find, on my arrival here from Fort Scott, two long and interesting letters from you. The only thing that grieves me is, that I cannot get to Mexico. I made an application to-day to join the army going to the front. Whether the Adjutant-General will favor it or not, I do not know, but think it doubtful. I am actively engaged as Superintendent of the recruiting service for the Western Division, and acting as Assistant Inspector-General; but though my services are said to be useful, I still want to go to Mexico.

Your affectionate brother, WINFIELD.

Had Lieutenant Hancock's request been refused, or had his regiment been continued on service along the western frontier instead of going to Mexico with Scott, the career of the young soldier would have been delayed in its opening. And, while we cannot doubt that his genius and his strong qualities of mind would have brought him to a commanding position in time, his course would probably have been different, and possibly with widely different results.

But he was to have his desire. In June, only a few weeks after his desponding letter to his brother, his regiment was ordered to join Scott's army in Mexico. Taylor had been fighting in a desultory way along the border. Scott was to penetrate the interior and "conquer a peace," all in a short campaign of six months and five days. Already, on the 9th of March, 1847, Scott had landed at Vera Cruz with twelve thousand men, under fire and through the surf, without losing a boat or a man, and had taken the city and the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, with five thousand prisoners. Already the army had begun to push toward the interior, and the heights of Cerro Gordo had been stormed and taken. The gallant Shields, then a general, and Phil. Kearney, then a captain of cavalry, had been honorably mentioned; Robert E. Lee, then a captain of engineers, was in what Scott called his "little cabinet;" and Colonel Harney was leading his artillery. It was a time when reputations were making rapidly, and every young officer's ambition burned to take part in the conflict. Then Scott pushed his arms on to Jalapa, and thence to Puebla, always straight toward the capital.

Here it was that Winfield Scott Hancock first found himself in service under the veteran soldier for whom he was named. Reinforcements, after long delay, reached the army of invasion at Puebla. Among them was Gen. Franklin Pierce, in command of a brigade; Beauregard and McClellan, both then lieutenants, were on the Engineer Corps; Hammond was an assistant-surgeon. In fact, the roster of the little army under Scott that met at Puebla contained names that the history of the past thirty years has made famous throughout the world. Lieut. Winfield Scott Hancock was in Colonel Clarke's brigade, the second in General Worth's division.

The advance began on the 7th of August, 1847, only three months after Lieutenant Hancock had written his doubts of ever being permitted to share in the dangers and the glories of this war. Santa Anna had then had nearly four months since the battle of Cerro Gordo to collect and reorganize the entire means of the Mexican Republic for a last vigorous attempt to crush the invasion. The Mexican general possessed wonderful energy, ability, and courage; and it was no easy task that Scott had undertaken, to march his little army through a hostile country to the capture of the capital city. It is reported of the Duke of Wellington, that, having followed carefully on the map the victorious course of the United States army up to the basin of Mexico, at that point he said: "Scott is lost. He has been carried away by successes. He can't take the city, and he can't fall back upon his base."

On the 10th of August the regiment in which

Hancock served crossed the Rio Frio range of mountains, the highest point in the bed of the road between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In his account, General Scott says: "Descending the long western slope, a magnificent basin, with, near its centre, the object of all our dreams and hopes, toils and dangers—once the gorgeous seat of the Montezumas, now the capital of a great republic—first broke upon our enchanted view. The close-surrounding lakes, sparkling under a bright sun, seemed, in the distance, pendant diamonds. The numerous steeples, of great beauty and elevation, with Popocatepetl, ten thousand feet higher, apparently near enough to touch with the hand, filled the mind with religious awe. Recovering from the sublime trance, probably not a man in the column failed to say to his neighbor or himself, That splendid city soon shall be ours! All were ready to suit the action to the word."

Here, in descending the Rio Frio range into the valley of Mexico, Worth's brigade, in which was Lieutenant Hancock, was sent forward to lead the way. Forty-seven miles in eight days brought the army over a route deemed impracticable by the enemy, to San Augustin; and thence the fighting began. A series of brilliant events was contested, all in the sight of the city of Mexico. Contreras was taken in two days of sharp fighting against greatly superior numbers, and then came San Antonio, through which was opened the road to Mexico. Worth's division had shared the honors of Contreras, and to it was also given the work of attacking San Antonio in front. These were the first considerable engagements in which Lieutenant Hancock

ever took part. It was his brigade which, at San Antonio, in the words of General Scott in his official report, "turned to the left, and by a wide sweep, came out upon the high-road to the capital, cut in the centre the heavy garrison of three thousand men which was in retreat, drove one portion off upon Dolores and the other upon Churubusco, and, following in pursuit through the town, took one general prisoner, five abandoned guns, much ammunition, and other property."

It was a gallant dash, and the young officers of the Sixth Regiment proved their mettle. An eye-witness describes the scene of confusion as unparalleled. The magnificent causeway, lined on both sides with rows of stately shade-trees, was filled, as far as the eye could reach, with masses of the flying enemy. Cavalry, artillery, and infantry were all rushing forward pell-mell, amid the shouts of the officers as they gave their confused and hurried orders, the rumbling of artillery and baggage-wagons as the horses were whipped up to their full speed, the yells of teamsters and the shrieks of the wounded and dying as they were tumbled from their saddles by the unerring aim of our soldiers.

Raphael Semmes, since the notorious Confederate privateer admiral, was at that time on the staff of General Worth, and in describing this affair, he relates the following anecdote: "We made a great many prisoners, many of whom threw themselves at our feet in the greatest alarm and consternation. I happened to witness an amusing scene just as I came out upon the road. I saw, lying prostrate under one of the shade-

trees, a remarkably bulky-looking figure in the uniform of a Mexican general, and a soldier of one of our companies standing by him. Supposing the officer to have been killed, I inquired of the soldier if this were the fact. 'Oh, no, sir,' said he, 'he is only a little out of wind, being a fat man; I have just run him down.' The general afterwards informed me that, in the hurry of the retreat, his aid-de-camp had run off with his horse, and that this was the cause of his being captured!—a thing which, I suppose, could only occur in Mexico."

CHAPTER II.

Battle of Churubusco.— The Advance upon the City of Mexico.— The Bridge at Churubusco the Key to the Situation.— General Worth's Brigade ordered to carry the Fortification.— Lieutenant Hancock's Company Leads the Charge.— The Repulse.— The Tête du Pont taken by Storm.— Lieutenant Hancock wins his first Brevet for Gallantry in Action.

It was now the 20th of August, and Lieutenant Hancock was one of a victorious army — victorious, too, over many times its own numbers — on the great causeway leading straight to the city of Mexico. He had won his spurs at Contreras and at San Antonio, and Churubusco lay right before him, where the great battle was to be fought.

The city of Mexico lies in the centre of a basin or amphitheatre, whose mountain-rim is about one hundred and eighty miles in circumference. It formerly occupied islands in the lake of Tezcuco; but with its spread and growth the lake was largely filled up. The legend is, that the emigration under Montezuma was guided by the prediction that the great capital city of their people would be founded on the spot where an eagle was found seated upon a thorny cactus, grasping a serpent in his talons. The wanderers found the eagle thus seated, on an island in Lake Tezcuco, and there they proceeded to realize the prediction by founding the city of Mexico. Cortes

found it a great city, the centre of a wonderful pagan civilization. He had the ambition to make it a yet greater Christian city, in his rough way, tearing down temples only to build more magnificent cathedrals. But its general topographical features remained unchanged. Its streets were not more than four feet above the level of the water in the surrounding lakes. Moats and marshy lands, capable of being overflowed at will, constituted its best means of defence. Its only approaches were over causeways built ages before, and perfected as government works in later days.

It was into this basin that Scott's army had descended, with the city of Mexico in full view only a few miles distant. He had taken Contreras on the west, and San Antonio on the east, and Churubusco lay at the junction of the two highways, strongly fortified, from which the great causeway led straight on to the city of Mexico. The Rio de Churubusco runs due east, crossing this causeway about two miles north of San Antonio. The banks of the river had been artificially elevated to prevent inundation, and, like those of all Mexican water-courses, its sides were planted with rows of maguey, affording a screen to large numbers of troops, to which the elevated banks offered partial protection. South of the stream lay the scattered houses of the village of Churubusco, one of which was a massive stone convent that had been prepared for defence. It was surrounded by a field-work having embrasures and platforms for many cannon, its walls were pierced for musketry, its parapets and windows all afforded good positions for troops, and ammunition

to any amount was inside the buildings. Three thousand Mexican troops occupied this point.

Another, and more formidable work, was the *téte du pont* of Churubusco, covering the bridge by which the causeway of San Antonio led to the city of Mexico. The river was bridged where the causeway crossed, and at the approach from the south, this fortification, the "head of the bridge," was constructed. It was a beautiful field-work, scientifically constructed, with wet ditches, embrasures and platforms for a large armament. On each side of this formidable fortification stretched the dikes, or elevated banks of the river, occupied by dense masses of military which had been hurried forward by Santa Anna from the city. In front, the ground was occupied by corn-fields, with straggling fruit and other trees, the corn at that time being six feet high, and waving its green tassels most invitingly, but treacherously. The ploughed ground, though not miry, was heavy, and a network of cross-ditches and dikes for irrigating purposes obstructed the advance of the attacking force.

It was against such obstacles, with an army of twenty-five thousand men behind them, that the little brigade in which young Lieutenant Hancock fought was led. But it was the key to the whole position; it lay directly on the road to the capital; it must be carried.

The fugitives from San Antonio fell back in a disorderly retreat upon this position. General Worth, knowing that another battle lay in front of him, checked the heat of the pursuit, and moved forward coolly. As they approached the bridge, the Mexican artillery,

which enfiladed the road, and then the musketry, opened upon them. The action had already begun on the right of the Mexican line, where our troops had come up from the west, and a tremendous roar of artillery and small-arms was heard from one end to the other of the line of battle, extending more than a mile.

The day was perfectly clear; but the smoke, as it arose over the heads of the combatants, formed a deep canopy that partially obscured the sun, and reflected back the vivid flashes of the guns, as they belched fire and iron from the frowning fortification upon the advancing ranks.

Then it was that it became the duty of the Sixth Infantry to charge straight through this hell of fire upon the works in front of them. The rest of the brigade was ordered to move by the flank, parallel to the road through the fields; the Sixth was ordered directly up the road to storm the *tête du pont*.

Lieutenant Hancock's company, Captain Hoffman in command, led this terrible charge. The Mexicans in the work, whose attention had up to this time been directed to the troops advancing through the corn on either flank, seeing the gallant Sixth making this direct assault, turned all their guns upon it. Some of the men recoiled under the sweeping stroke of the artillery; but the officers rallied them, and with a shout they again rushed forward. But it was not to be done. The awful storm of lead and iron that poured down and across that causeway permitted no living thing to stand against it. In the words of a staff officer's report,

"the Sixth Infantry was met by so destructive a fire, ripping and cutting its ranks in pieces, that it was forced to recoil and fall back; which, however, was done with the coolness of a parade."

General Worth, who was with the advance on the flank, shouted to Lieutenant Hancock's company to leave the deadly causeway and incline to the right into the corn. Then, while still under a galling fire, they dashed past, at double-quick, the deep, wet ditch that surrounded the work, and carried it with the bayonet, Lieutenant Hancock, by the side of his captain, leading his men into the embrasures and over the walls without the help of ladders. The enemy could not withstand the shock, but gave way; and in a moment more the cheers that rang out gave notice to the brave fellows fighting along down the line that the key to the battle-field had been taken. A few shots were exchanged, a few bayonets crossed, and the greater number fled over the bridge toward the city, leaving guns, standards, and prisoners in the hands of our men.

But the battle was not yet over. It had lasted two hours from the time it was first opened by the Sixth Infantry to the time when the same regiment, with Hancock's company at its head, clambered into the *tête du pont*. It was another hour before the last of Santa Anna's twenty-five thousand men were in flight toward the city of Mexico. The capture of the bridge determined the fate of the battle. When the guns of the devoted fortress, which up to this time had not slackened their fire, were turned upon the Mexicans, a white flag was hung out from the convent balcony.

The pursuit was continued for more than half the distance from Churubusco to the gates of the city of Mexico, when it was stopped, by order of General Scott.

It was a costly victory. The loss on our side, in killed and wounded, was eleven hundred, of whom eighty-four were officers. This great disproportion of officers was due to the fact that they led, and the men followed them. In General Worth's report of this battle, he says: "When I recur to the nature of the ground, and the fact that the division (twenty-six hundred strong of all arms) was engaged from two to two and a half hours in a hand-to-hand conflict with from seven thousand to nine thousand of the enemy, having the advantage of position and occupying regular works, the mind is filled with wonder, and the heart with gratitude to the brave officers and soldiers whose steady and indomitable valor has aided in achieving results so honorable to our country."

It was at Churubusco that Phil. Kearney lost his arm; and it was at Churubusco that Winfield Scott Hancock, whose company led that terrible charge down the causeway to the bridge, won his first brevet. The order from the War Department commissioning him brevet First Lieutenant is dated Aug. 20, 1847, the day of the battle of Churubusco, and states that the honor is conferred "for gallant and meritorious conduct at Contreras and Churubusco,"— a formula which signifies the highest cause for which advancement in rank can be conferred.

CHAPTER III.

Molino del Rey. — Situation of Scott's Army before the City of Mexico. — The Gates of the City and their Fortifications. — Lieutenant Hancock again foremost in the Post of Danger. — He leads his Company against the Battery at Molino del Rey. — Eleven out of fourteen Officers killed. — Hancock saved amid the Carnage.

THE battle of Churubusco was one in which the determined bravery of the American troops and the skill of their officers in any emergency were conspicuously displayed; for the Mexicans fought bravely and like true men, although not even their overwhelmingly large numbers availed them for success. And, moreover, the battle was fought without reconnoissance or knowledge of the ground and the obstacles to be encountered. Even the subordinate officers showed their ability to comprehend the situation and take quick and decisive action on the spur of the moment, demonstrating not only their impetuous bravery, but their coolness and skill in the turmoil of battle.

And yet another test of the young lieutenant's quality was close at hand; for only four miles distant was the city of Mexico, with its outlying fortifications, which must be passed, and the citadel taken, before a peace should be conquered.

The armistice to which the combatants agreed after the battle of Churubusco, came to an end without any definite result from the negotiations for peace. These

negotiations came to an end Sept. 6. The United States army was then at Tacubaya. It was here that Lieutenant Hancock wrote home to his father:—

TACUBAYA, MEXICO, Aug. 26, 1847.

MY DEAR FATHER:—I feel thankful that I am able to write you from this place. We had to fight desperately to get here. It has been the theatre of a sanguinary battle. I left off my last letter to engage in preparations for it.

Your affectionate son,

WINFIELD.

The city of Mexico, with its two hundred thousand inhabitants, lay close at hand. They could almost reconnoitre it with their field-glasses. On the side where the United States army was operating there were four principal gates, each gate a fortress, and each approached by a grand causeway. The ground between these causeways was low and marshy, and in the rainy season, as then, partly inundated by detached pools of water, and impracticable for troops. Several cross-roads passed from one causeway to another, sometimes two or more of these entering the city at or near the same gate. These various approaches were cut from point to point, and were defended by breast-works and artillery. In addition to the batteries which commanded the direct approaches, other batteries were placed on the flanks of these so as to fire across the road, and at the same time upon the flanks and rear of the first batteries, in case these should be carried. The walls of the city were surrounded by wet ditches, of great width and depth, intended for

the purpose of drainage, and others crossed and re-crossed these. Every foot of the ground at all approachable had been taken possession of by the Mexicans and fortified with breastworks and artillery.

Much of this fortification had doubtless been done by Santa Anna during the armistice; and there have always been grave doubts as to the wisdom of the policy pursued by General Scott in this campaign. During his life, party denunciation was bitter indeed; but at this time it is not purposed to discuss the question whether the battle of Churubusco was necessary; whether Scott would not have done better to follow Kearney when he led his troopers to the San Antonio gate of the city of Mexico; whether the taking of the Molino del Rey was a mistake; or any other of the vexed questions of the Mexican war. The purpose here is to sketch those events which marked the career of young Hancock in his first campaign; and glorious events they were, considered simply as exhibitions of bravery, skill, and force employed in the service of his country.

It was while encamped at Tacubaya, opposite these complicated and formidable fortifications, that the armistice was ended; and at the same time word was brought to General Scott that the Mexicans were massing troops near one of the four gates, that commanding the causeway from Chapultepec, for the purpose of protecting what was supposed to be a gun foundry. This supposed foundry was a range of strong stone buildings, known as the Molino del Rey, or King's Mill, about one mile north of Tacubaya. It formed the

western side of an enclosure surrounding the rock, castle, groves, and fields of Chapultepec. The guns of the castle commanded the Molino. It was reported that the Mexicans had found themselves short of artillery, owing to the large captures of our troops, and that the church-bells of the city had been sent to this foundry for conversion into ordnance. General Scott decided that it was necessary to destroy this factory of arms, and at the same time prepare the way for the taking of the castle of Chapultepec.

As happened so frequently in this campaign, General Worth's division was chosen to carry out this dangerous and difficult operation. Indeed, the command in which Lieutenant Hancock held a commission was especially favored with opportunities for distinction in this war; and the youth who, such a short time before, had mourned the fate which seemed to forbid his taking an active part in the contest, found himself foremost in the places of danger and of honor.

General Worth received his orders on the 7th of September. It was to be a night attack, or, rather, the position was to be taken under cover of the darkness and the assault was to be made at daybreak. At three o'clock on the morning of the 8th of September, General Worth's command was in position and the ball was opened by the artillery. For some time there was no response from the castle of Chapultepec, and the crashing of the shot through the masonry of the Molino del Rey was the only answer. But as the line was advanced all doubts were dispelled. The location of the Mexican battery had been changed during the night,

and it now opened heavily upon the flank of the attacking party with round shot and grape, cutting down officers and men with fearful carnage. The charge was ordered, and the men, bringing down their bayonets, rushed straight at the battery, through the storm of grape and musketry, driving the enemy from their guns and for the moment capturing the position and turning the guns upon their late owners. But before the guns could be discharged the Mexicans perceived that they had been dislodged by a mere handful of men, and they returned to the charge, aided by a tremendous fire of musketry from the troops in and on top of the Molino, drove out our soldiers and bayoneted the wounded. It was a frightful ordeal, more sanguinary than even that charge along the causeway at Churubusco. Out of the fourteen officers composing the command of the assaulting force, eleven were shot down by the murderous fire.

It so happened that Lieutenant Hancock was in this engagement in command of his company, although only a second lieutenant, Captain Hoffman having been assigned to the command of the Sixth Infantry battalion; and with him, also lieutenants, were Sedgwick and Buckner and Rosecrans.

Decimated but not daunted, this gallant command returned to the charge again and again. It was a rough and fearful scramble. One party commenced tearing down the hacienda with no other implements than their muskets; others thrust their bayonets into the crevices of the stone walls and climbed up by them; others fired into apertures or climbed broken sheds

that offered a means of access. Finally the southern gate was dashed in, others followed it, and our troops had possession of the Molino del Rey.

The battle, in which the young Lieutenant Hancock led the van of the assaulting party, had been won by three thousand against fourteen thousand: but at a terrible loss. Of this three thousand, nearly one-third were lost under the devastating fire of the Mexicans. Hancock, while foremost in the fight, bore a charmed life. The providence that watches over the fate of nations had greater deeds for him to do, and the scorching tests to which he was put in the bloody conflicts around the Mexican basin were toughening his nerves and strengthening his soul for the nobler work of battling for the Union.

CHAPTER IV.

Chapultepec.— Hancock describes his Feelings while confined to the House by Fever.—He creeps to the Roof and cheers as his Company take the Castle.— The Entry into the City of Mexico.—Lieutenant Hancock's Letters Home.— End of the War.

THERE now remained the fortress of Chapultepec to be reduced before the army marched upon the city in the path chosen by General Scott. This fortress stood on a rocky and picturesque mound at the head of one of the great causeways leading into the city, and commanding the road. The waters of Lake Tezcuco in ancient times washed its base, and before the conquest by Cortes it was a favorite resort of Montezuma, who had a palace there and was accustomed to walk through the cypress groves in his hours of recreation and retirement. On one side, the hill was inaccessible, being a sheer precipice of rock. On the other, it was surrounded by two massive stone walls, with ditches. A handsome building crowned its summit, where was the military academy of the republic and the citadel of the fortress. Half-way up the hill was the Glorieta, a redoubt, manned with guns and nearly four hundred men. The assault was made on the 13th of September.

As usual, the Sixth Infantry was prominent in this action. Where Lieutenant Hancock was, a letter from him to his brother tells :—

City of Mexico, Dec. 6, 1847.

My Dear Hilary:—I am again made happy by the arrival of three letters from home.

You ask me if I have been in battle? I answer, proudly, yes! Besides being in several skirmishes on the road from Puebla to Vera Cruz,—in all of which I can truly say I have endeavored to do my duty,—it was my part to participate in the battles of San Antonio, Churubusco, Molino del Rey, and the conquest of the city of Mexico. I only missed the fight of Chapultepec by being sick in my tent, and off duty at the time. I shall always be sorry that I was absent. I was lying ill with chills and fever, directly under the fort, at the time the action began. I could not remain still under the firing; but, wrapping my blanket about me, I crept to the top of the roof of the nearest house, watched the fight, and had strength enough to cheer with the boys when the Castle fell. The balls whizzed about me, but I kept my post, doing what I could; and when I learned that the colors I saw hoisted on the conquered walls were those of my own regiment, my heart beat quick at the glorious sight.

The winter has set in here, and some chilly days are the consequence. The summits of lofty Popocatepetl are capped with more snow than is usual at this season. No snows, however, are on the plains. Here the roads are open and many of them beautiful. The Almada, or great square of the capital, is far superior to anything of the kind in the United States. The carriage road on the outskirts is splendid, and, at times, crowded with gay equipages. It is also a fashionable resort for walks. Its age is three centuries.

Give my love to father, mother, brother John, and all my other friends.

Winfield.

General Scott, in his official report, gives a brief and

vivid description of the assault which Lieutenant Hancock saw from the house-top. He says :—

"A strong redoubt, midway, had to be carried before reaching the castle on the heights. The advance of our brave men, led by brave officers, though necessarily slow, was unwavering, over rocks, chasms, and mines, and under the hottest fire of cannon and musketry. The redoubt now yielded to resistless valor, and the shouts that followed announced to the castle the fate that impended. The enemy were steadily driven from shelter to shelter. The retreat allowed not time to fire a single mine without the certainty of blowing up friend and foe. Those who, at a distance, attempted to apply matches to the long trains, were shot down by our men. There was death below as well as above the ground. At length the ditch and wall of the main work were reached; the scaling-ladders were brought up and planted by the storming parties; some of the daring spirits, first in the assault, were cast down, killed or wounded; but a lodgment was soon made; streams of heroes followed; all opposition was overcome, and several of our regimental colors flung out from the upper walls, amidst long-continued shouts and cheers, which sent dismay into the capital. No scene could have been more animating or glorious."

The great dependence of the Mexicans had been placed upon Chapultepec, which many had believed to be impregnable; and when that fell, the city of Mexico fell with it. There were yet batteries to be taken, barricades to be passed, and fortified houses to be cleared of combatants. But on the night of that day, Sept. 13, 1847, General Worth's division slept within the city walls, and on the 14th, the grand entry of the

American army was made. As General Scott says in his autobiography: "Under a brilliant sun, I entered the city at the head of the cavalry, cheered by Worth's division of regulars, all the bands playing, in succession, 'Hail Columbia,' 'Washington's March,' 'Yankee Doodle,' 'Hail to the Chief,' etc." The American army had dwindled to six thousand by casualties and disease; and these troops entered the city in the undress uniforms in which they had marched so many weary miles, and fought so many desperate battles. To behold so novel a spectacle, the various streets poured forth their thousands of spectators, and the balconies and house-tops were filled with a gay and picturesque throng. So dense was the crowd that it was frequently necessary to halt until the pressure was removed.

There was no further fighting, except desultory efforts of the mob and released criminals to create disturbance, which were put down by prompt measures, and the army of conquest became an army of occupation. A treaty of peace was signed in February of the following year. Lieutenant Hancock's regiment remained with the rest, and we find him writing home his impressions of a Mexican winter:—

NEAR TOLUCA, Jan. 5, 1848.

MY DEAR FATHER:— We have another snow mountain overlooking us, the Neviado. When the wind blows from that direction it is bitterly cold. But January is the end of the Mexican winter. The days begin to grow warmer as the month advances, although the nights continue chilly. There

are no fireplaces, and, consequently, no fires; as we more northern born find to our great discomfort. The valley of Toluca is most beautiful, and very fertile. Like all the other Mexican valleys I have seen, it is perfectly level, as if it had once been the bottom of a large lake. Some of these wonderful areas look like the craters of extinct volcanoes. In the valley of Mexico, one of the remaining lakes is twenty miles long and fifteen broad. The variety of fruits produced here is astonishing. On one of the market days, recently, over fifty different kinds were on sale. Think of opening a fine, fresh, ripe watermelon in the month of January. Love to all.

WINFIELD.

In the series of battles which attended the march of Scott's victorious army from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico, young Hancock, then in his twenty-fourth year, had proved himself a true soldier. The opportunity for which he had longed had come to him, and he had shown those strong and sterling traits of character from which, in later years, there was to develop the hero and the statesman. His name was honorably mentioned in the reports, and his gallantry and capacity were officially recognized, as before stated, by the brevet "for gallant and meritorious conduct at Contreras and Churubusco." The brevet commission he received in August, 1848, dating from that hot day, one year before, when he led his men against the *tête du pont* at Churubusco. His native State of Pennsylvania also acknowledged his services in a series of resolutions adopted by the Legislature, in which his name, with those of other Pennsylvania soldiers, was mentioned.

CHAPTER V.

Lieutenant Hancock Returns to the Department of the West.— He becomes Regimental Quartermaster, and then Adjutant.— His Marriage at St. Louis.— Steady Advancement in his Profession.— The Seminole War.— Brigham Young's Declaration of Independence.— Harney's March to Salt Lake.— Hancock Ordered to California.

Lieutenant Hancock remained in Mexico to the very end of the war, saw the Mexican flag again raised on the citadel after the treaty of peace had been succeeded by the evacuation, and then returned home with his command.

Then there followed a period of rest and routine duties at the western stations. Our western frontier was rapidly extending; more rapidly since the Mexican war had opened California to our settlers. And Fort Crawford and Jefferson Barracks, where Lieutenant Hancock passed the next two years, were becoming constantly of less account except as depots.

June 30, 1848, Lieutenant Hancock was made Regimental Quartermaster, serving in that capacity until Oct. 1, 1849, when he was made Adjutant. He thus acquired that practical experience of the duties of the several positions which was required to supplement his theoretical training. He had already passed the test of battle; he was now acquiring the details of management.

Here he began to show evidences of the remarkable

administrative talent which afterwards distinguished him, and which marked him as peculiarly fitted for executive duties. General Clarke, under whom he had served with such gallantry in Mexico, was in command of the Department of the West, with headquarters at St. Louis; and under him Lieutenant Hancock served for the next six years, being stationed at St. Louis and at Jefferson Barracks, about twelve miles down the river. We find him constantly charged with new responsibilities, and steadily advancing in the line of his profession. He was promoted to a full Second Lieutenancy, Jan. 27, 1853, and took a place on General Clarke's staff. June 19, 1855, he was appointed Assistant Adjutant-General of the Department of the West, and served in that capacity until the Seminole war broke out in Florida, when he was sent to Fort Myers with the rank of Captain and Assistant Quartermaster.

It was during his residence at St. Louis that Lieutenant Hancock, on the 24th of January, 1850, married Miss Almira Russell, daughter of Samuel Russell, a merchant of that city.

The service of Captain Hancock in the Seminole war was confined to the post of Fort Myers, near St. Augustine, where he did quartermaster duty; and at the close of that enterprise, the country having fortunately no use for its army beyond a sort of police duty, he was sent with his regiment to Leavenworth, Kan., to exert a quieting influence upon the turbulent spirits of that era of border ruffianism.

It was at this time, 1857, that Brigham Young

undertook to set up an independent government of his own in Utah. The Mormons, under his able leadership, had conquered for themselves a home in the midst of natural difficulties of the harshest sort; had secured a foothold in the centre of the continent; and, if allowed autonomy, they would, in years to come, have in their hands the key to all trans-continental transportation and travel. This was evidently the dream of the far-seeing and hard-headed prophet who had led this people out from a land of persecution and established a theocracy in the wilderness. As Floyd, then Secretary of War, stated the situation in his report to the Thirty-fifth Congress: "From the time their numbers reached a point sufficient to constitute a community capable of anything like independent action, this people have claimed to detach themselves from the binding obligations of the laws which governed the communities where they chanced to live. They have substituted for the laws of the land a theocracy, having for its head an individual whom they profess to believe a prophet of God. This prophet demands obedience and receives it implicitly from his people, in virtue of what he assures them to be authority derived from revelations received by him from Heaven. When he finds it convenient to exercise any special command, these opportune revelations of a higher law come to his aid. From his decrees there is no appeal; against his will there is no resistance."

Just at this time the people of the United States had become thoroughly aroused at the manner in which the Mormon prophet was exercising his power. In order to prevent the encroachment of "Gentiles" upon his

Promised Land, he had even resorted to massacre, either by his own men or through his Indian allies; he had refused to yield to the authority of the Federal government in matters over which it had control; and, in short, he had set up as a sovereign monarch in the path of our emigration across the continent, to obstruct or to favor, as it might please his mightiness.

Under these circumstances, President Buchanan resolved to exercise the authority given him by the Constitution and the laws, and remove from the government of the Territory of Utah an official who combined in so dangerous a manner the monarchical and civil authority. He appointed Mr. Cummings to be governor of Utah, in Brigham Young's place; and on the latter's refusal to retire, he sent out a sufficient force under General Harney to compel the prophet's acquiescence. Captain Hancock was in the command assigned to this expedition.

Although the attempted secession of Brigham Young was something like a tempest in a tea-pot, when considered in comparison with the greater movement we have since seen, it was not then to be lightly treated. The prophet's proclamation, as governor of Utah, was really a declaration of war against the United States. It opened thus: "We are invaded by a hostile force who are evidently assailing us to accomplish our overthrow and destruction. For twenty-five years we have trusted officials of the government only to be insulted and betrayed. Our houses have been plundered, and then burned; our fields laid waste; our principal men butchered while under the pledged faith of the government for their safety; and our families driven from

their homes to find that shelter in the barren wilderness and that protection among hostile savages which were denied them in the boasted abodes of Christianity and civilization." Then he goes on to declare martial law, and to call upon the people to "stand in their own defence."

It was, indeed, a very pretty little rebellion, as far as it got; and it was only by good management on the part of the officers of the Harney expedition that it did not go much further. Here, for instance, is a sample of the orders under which the Mormon militia and guerillas fought. It is an order issued by one of the "apostles" in the Mormon hierarchy:—

HEADQUARTERS EASTERN EXPEDITION,
Oct. 4, 1857.

TO MAJOR JOSEPH TAYLOR:

You will proceed with all possible despatch to the Oregon road, near the bend of Bear River. When you approach the road, send scouts ahead to ascertain if the invading troops have passed that way. Should they have passed, take a concealed route and get ahead of them. On ascertaining the locality or route of the troops, proceed at once to annoy them in every possible way. Use every exertion to stampede their animals, and set fire to their trains. Burn the whole country before them and on their flanks. Keep them from sleeping at night by surprises; blockade the road by felling trees or destroying river-fords; watch for opportunities to set fire to the grass on their windward, so as, if possible, to envelope their trains. Leave no grass before them that can be burned. Take no life, but annoy them and destroy their trains.

God bless you and give you success.

Your brother in Christ, DANIEL U. WELLS.

Through this region of fanatical guerillas and into the heart of hostile Mormondom the accidents of the service took Captain Hancock. When the mission of General Harney was concluded, and Brigham Young was reduced to at least apparent acquiescence in the inevitable, Captain Hancock's command was ordered to the Pacific coast. Straight across the continent, in the days when the slow-moving ox-team marked the rate of the traveller's progress, instead of the lightning-express train, he led his company from Fort Bridger in Utah to Benicia in California, under the shadow of Monte Diablo. It took his command three months to make the journey. Thence he was transferred to Los Angeles, having been made Chief Quartermaster of the Southern District of California.

It was here that the outbreak of the war of the Rebellion found Winfield Scott Hancock. He was ready for his country's use. The patriotic soul, the native ability, the hard-earned experience were all there; and the opportunity had come. It was for this service that his parents had trained him to honor and self-reliance in his Pennsylvania home; that he had been tried in the hottest furnace of war in Mexico; and that for years he had been studying the work of practical army administration in comparative quiet. The providence which directs the affairs of men had prepared in Winfield Scott Hancock a heroic servant of the people against their time of need. That time had now come.

WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK

PART III.

THE PATRIOT.

CHAPTER I.

The Fire upon Sumter. — How the News was received in California. — Captain Hancock's Efforts to keep the State in the Union. — He at once asks to be ordered into Active Service. — Is commissioned Brigadier-General of Volunteers. — The Army of the Potomac.

The echoes of the cannon-shot fired that Friday morning in April, 1861, against the walls of Fort Sumter, were heard across the continent. They were heard with differing sentiments among the people of California. Southern California, in which Los Angeles is situated, most certainly did not hear these sounds of actual rebellion with entire disapprobation. For disunion ideas had propagated quite across the land, and on the Pacific, as well as on the Gulf, there were those who looked longingly for a Southern Confederacy; for the disruption of the Union; for the substitution of the stars and bars for the stars and stripes.

It was quite natural that this sentiment should exist in California. That State was separated from the rest of the Union by the distance of half a continent. The means of communication were poor and laborious. No Pacific Railroad put its iron bands across the land and anchored the West to the East; but we were almost as two peoples, one in name but divided in sympathy.

In Southern California disunion sentiment was especially rampant. It was not comfortable for a man to be known as a Unionist there. That section was ready

to drop out and join the Confederacy, even if the northern part of the State should stay in the Union.

And here it was that Captain Hancock was stationed, entrusted with a vast amount of government stores and material, in his capacity of District Quartermaster, in the midst of disunion purposes. There was nothing covert about the expressions of sympathy with the South and hostility toward the North with which he was surrounded. Much of the population of California came from the South, and its ideas were largely Southern. These ideas were proclaimed without restraint and without fear. Popular outbreaks were seriously threatened against the authorities which retained their allegiance to the Union. The situation in California was, indeed, even more critical than in many of the border States whose loyalty was most questionable. The danger was, that all that immense country, whose richness was just developing, would be carried away as one of the brightest trophies of the Confederacy.

The position which Captain Hancock occupied at this moment was a most trying one. In case of an outbreak, or the success of the secession movement in California, his department would be the first to suffer, as the supplies under his control offered a tempting prize. On the other hand, should he weaken in his loyalty to the Union, and give even tacit encouragement to the rebellious spirit about him, he would find himself on the top wave of popularity, and at once a hero of the people.

In this crisis the intrinsic character of the man displayed itself. He declared himself without hesitation.

He threw his personal influence, which was great, against the rapidly developing secession sentiment; and in his official position he was unyielding. To emphasize his earnestness in the matter, he at once applied to the governor of Pennsylvania, his native State, for a command in the volunteers then being raised for service; and while awaiting an answer to his application he devoted himself to encouraging and spreading Union sentiments in California. By public speeches and by loyal example the young patriot labored in the midst of an unfriendly community, performing services that were of the greatest value in retaining California in its place in the Union. His course met the approval of the government and of the loyal people of the whole country.

In his course at this time, Captain Hancock was true to the traditions of his family and to the teachings of his youth. He displayed the qualities of high honor, of strict conscientiousness, and of inflexible devotion to duty which marked his conduct from his very boyhood days, and which later developed so grandly in a wider field.

In the flurry and demoralization of the opening days of the war for the Union, Captain Hancock's request for a command in the Pennsylvania volunteers lay for some time unanswered. But his was not a spirit to brook inaction. With North and South simultaneously rising to arms, his impulse urged him irresistibly to share the conflict. With the government to which he had sworn allegiance in danger, his sword could not rest undrawn in its defence.

Burning to serve his country in the field, Captain Hancock then applied to the Department at Washington to be ordered East for active service. It was a characteristic course for the young officer to take; and it proved a most fortunate step in his career. Regular army officers of undoubted and pronounced loyalty were in demand at that time, for the organization of the army of volunteers collecting in the several States. There was no mistaking the quality of Captain Hancock's metal; and General Scott, who had personal knowledge of his impetuous gallantry, and his real soldierly ability while serving in the sharp and hot Mexican war, at once ordered him East in accordance with his request.

The order for his transfer came Aug. 3, 1861, and Captain Hancock at once turned over the Quartermaster's Department to his successor, and started for the East, reaching New York in September. Without stopping for a moment, even to visit his parents at Norristown, although he had then been absent from them for more than two years, he pushed straight on to Washington, and reported to the War Department for active service.

At this time Captain Hancock was thirty-eight years of age. He had served with distinction in the war with Mexico and in the everglades of Florida. He had patiently performed the routine duties of the frontier posts at the West. He had studied the situation between the Union and the seceding States, and had definitely made up his mind as to which side called him as a true servant of his country. Although never a

politician, he was a stanch Democrat by conviction, earnest in his support of constitutional government, and in every sense a patriot.

Captain Hancock's eagerness for active employment, the unmistakable loyalty of his purpose, his brilliant services as a lieutenant, and his soldierly bearing when he reported for duty at Washington, brought him prominently to the notice of President Lincoln, and he was at once assigned to the post of Chief Quartermaster on the staff of Gen. Robert Anderson, the hero of Fort Sumter, who had been placed in command of the volunteer force which he was raising in the State of Kentucky. But fortune placed him elsewhere. General McClellan, a fellow-cadet of Hancock, who also had won his first brevet in the same battles of Contreras and Churubusco, had, in July previous, come into command of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan knew the sort of men that he needed, and he knew that Captain Hancock was one of them. He at once made formal application for the commission of Hancock as Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and his assignment to service in the Army of the Potomac. This application was made unexpectedly to Captain Hancock, and without any solicitation on the part of his friends. And thus he was placed with the army to whose achievements he was to add so much glory, and where he was to make the world-wide reputation which now belongs to him, as one of the greatest generals of the age.

The commission of General Hancock was dated Sept. 23, 1861, and he was assigned to the division of the

Army of the Potomac commanded by Gen. "Baldy" Smith, lying across the chain bridge near Lewinsville. Until March, 1862, General Hancock was engaged in the defences of Washington. After that time he was in the field. His career as a patriot soldier was begun.

CHAPTER II.

The Peninsular Campaign.— Siege and Capture of Yorktown.— Pursuit of the Confederates.— The Battle of Williamsburg.— Hooker Repulsed at Fort Magruder.— Hancock Turns the Enemy's Flank and Saves the Day.— The Charge Down the Hill.— "Hancock was Superb."

In the latter part of March, 1862, the Army of the Potomac, which McClellan had collected and organized at Washington, was transported to Fortress Monroe, and there began the great Peninsular Campaign, which commenced with Yorktown and ended with the terrible seven days' conflict before Richmond. This so-called Peninsula was the tract of land, low and often marshy, lying between the York and James rivers. Yorktown lay about twenty miles from Fortress Monroe; Richmond about seventy-five miles in a straight line. McClellan's army of over one hundred thousand men, with animals, batteries, wagons, and all the enormous equipage required for such a host, was transported from Alexandria to Fortress Monroe, with what a European critic has called "the stride of a giant," and with the loss of only eight mules and nine barges, and the campaign was begun in which Hancock held his first general command.

General Hancock's brigade consisted of four fine regiments, the Fifth Wisconsin, the Sixth Maine, the

Forty-ninth Pennsylvania, and the Forty-third New York. They were well officered and well drilled; and under Hancock's training they soon acquired the steadiness and nerve of veterans. Even before he led them into an engagement, he felt and knew that they could be depended upon in any emergency. Nor did they forfeit his confidence. He little knew what these regiments were to do for him. His purpose and aim in their drill and tuition were to create an arm for effective service in the cause of his country. But it was good material with which to work, and he fashioned an instrument that was to make his name immortal.

As soon as Smith's division landed at Hampton, it was sent to lead the advance on the left of the Yorktown lines, where McClellan thought he had discovered a weak spot, near Lee's Mill. This was a dam covered by a battery. Here four companies of the Vermont troops crossed the creek, wading breast-deep under a heavy fire from eighteen guns, and carried the Confederate rifle-trenches. Failing to receive reinforcements, they were obliged to retire.

In the meantime the army had been feeling its way through the woods, and Hancock's brigade was sent to the right, making a reconnoissance in force and developing the enemy's lines in a direction where the Union line was not yet complete. The result of this reconnoissance, when the attempt to break the enemy's line on the left had failed, was to determine General McClellan upon taking Yorktown by siege; and from the 7th of April until the evacuation of Yorktown, May 3, Hancock and his brigade were constantly on duty

in the trenches or skirmishing with the Confederate pickets.

When, on the morning of May 4, after heavy cannonading by the Union batteries, it was found that the Confederate works were deserted, there began a race along the roads leading to Richmond, after the flying enemy. They caught up with them at Williamsburg, where the rebels had built another line of fortifications, extending almost entirely across the Peninsula from river to river. Rain came on and rendered the roads almost impassable. General Hooker took up position on the left and made an ineffectual attempt to capture Fort Magruder at that end of the line. He was forced to withdraw, with the loss of seventeen hundred men.

Now came the first opportunity for Hancock to display those qualities of generalship which he possessed, and to leap at once to fame as a patriot soldier. All before this had been skirmishing. He was now to do a deed of war.

Smith's division, occupying a position on the right of our line, had not engaged the enemy. But, towards noon of May 5, General Hancock obtained permission to reconnoitre the Confederate left. Taking two additional regiments and two light batteries, he moved a mile or more to the right, carefully feeling the strength of the enemy. Coming to an opening in the woods, he saw before him a deep ravine with a dam across it, and on the opposite bluff a rebel fortification, the extreme left of the line of works. A glance was enough to show that it was not strongly manned. The word was given, the troops poured across the old mill

bridge and dam, swarmed up the bluff and captured the redoubt. With equal expedition a road was made for the artillery, which was speedily dragged across. Twelve hundred yards in advance was another redoubt, which was taken in the same manner.

It was a masterly stroke, and one which proved of the first importance in the battle of Williamsburg. By one quick movement, Hancock had turned the enemy's flank and debouched upon his rear; and unless he could be stopped and driven back, the whole Confederate line would be untenable.

When Hancock formed his brigade in line of battle within the enemy's fortifications on the crest of the hill which he had seized, and brought up his artillery, he found there were two more redoubts between him and Fort Magruder and directed his fire upon these. Sending his two batteries to the front, he began an artillery duel. But the situation was a dangerous one. Hancock's little command was shut off by a deep and almost impassable ravine from the rest of the troops, while in front was the whole rebel army, an overwhelming force. He sent for reinforcements, but none came. On the contrary, he received orders to retire. But Hancock, realizing the commanding importance of the position he had taken, delayed as long as possible executing the order from General Sumner. He knew that, with adequate support, the Confederate army was at our mercy.

It was not until five o'clock that he gave the command to fall back. Then, the rebel General Johnston had finished with Hooker at Fort Magruder, and was

making preparations to avert the danger on his left flank by overwhelming Hancock's audacious advance. Hancock saw that the Confederates were in motion on his front, and that they had reoccupied the two redoubts from which they had last been driven; but hardly had he called back his batteries from their advanced position, when, with a tremendous cheer, Early's troops poured out of the woods on his right, and formed in two splendid lines of battle, advancing rapidly.

This was, perhaps, the most critical point of Hancock's military career. He had ventured all on this, his first really important separate movement in the campaign. He had led his brigade into a position where it was confronted by a vastly larger force, with the road of retreat cut off. Retreat, indeed, could mean nothing but rout, overthrow and capture; and with this, a shock to his rising reputation from which it might never recover. On the other hand, victory against such odds meant immediate fame.

If he could trust his men, he might yet win. He could trust them. More than that, they could trust their commander. They stood firm.

Hancock formed his line, as Early's troops marched on with shouts. He had about sixteen hundred men. His two batteries played upon the advancing Confederates, but without checking their onset. Forward they came, regardless of shell, and hardly stopping for canister, swept around and almost enveloped the artillery, which turned quickly, rattled up the hill, and went into battery again upon the slope. Backward the brigade retreated slowly, firing steadily as if at practice-

drill. Now the impetuous charge comes nearer, and the taunting shouts of Early's men are heard above the crack of the rifles: "Bull Run! Bull Run! That flag is ours!"

Hancock had been sitting on his horse close behind the centre of the line, watching with impenetrable face the phases of the action. What he thought at this supreme moment, no one can tell. What he did the world knows.

The yelling Confederates, in double line, were swarming up the slope of the hill on which his little brigade was drawn up. The flush of anticipated victory was upon every face of that advancing multitude; the tone of victory was heard in every voice. They were within thirty yards when Hancock, waving his hat in his hand, dashed forward in front of his men, and shouting, "Gentlemen! charge!" led the advance, bare-headed, down the hill and upon the enemy.

It seemed madness to attempt to turn back the mass that was sweeping up the hill. There it was, surging upward, vast, irregular, apparently irresistible, so near at hand that the men on either side could see the features of their opponents. But Hancock knew his own power and the power of his men. It was not a mad venture; it was a triumph of personal courage, and of that military genius which divines by instinct when safety lies in rashness.

Hancock risked his own life and the lives of his men; and he won the day. At one instant the bristling and grisly line of the Confederate charge was in front of the brigade; the next there flashed between them and

the line this vision of valor incarnate; and with a shout that drowned the crackling of musketry his men followed where Hancock led. With lowered bayonets, and with line as perfect as if on parade, the brigade advanced.

The rebel line faltered, stopped, turned with a common impulse and slowly retreated down the hill before this gallant onslaught. They were not cowards; they only lacked the inspiration of such a leader as Hancock. They were, indeed, brave men. This was one of the few occasions during the war where bayonet-wounds were received in an actual charge of infantry. It is in official evidence that Hancock's men were obliged to bayonet the foremost of their assailants before the line broke.

Down the hill they went, the martial figure of Hancock on his horse marking the point where the hostile forces were joined in combat. They fought well and desperately, leaving five hundred corpses on that hillside. Others held up white handkerchiefs and surrendered. Of Hancock's little brigade, one hundred and twenty-nine were killed.

Then it was that reinforcements were sent to Hancock. General McClellan, arriving at the front, appreciated the value of the position taken by Hancock, and immediately ordered that he should receive the support he had asked for.

By this time it was night. The firing in front of Fort Magruder had ceased, and the troops, wet, tired, and hungry, slept on their arms in the mud. But Williamsburg was won. Hancock, in his first engagement

as a general commander, had by one bold and masterly movement seized the key of the position; by his fiery personal valor he had snatched victory out of the jaws of defeat, and had turned disaster into glorious success.

Leaving the ground covered with their dead and wounded, the Confederates hastened away under cover of the night to join the rest of Johnston's army, now marching rapidly towards the Chickahominy. Hancock had made Williamsburg untenable.

This was Hancock's first glory; and it was a substantial one. In that single day he rose from an obscure subordinate officer to a general whose name and whose praises were heralded from Maine to California. His opportunity had come, and he had seized it. He had won a national reputation.

Few of the generals of the Army of the Potomac, if any, would have taken the chances which Hancock took when he moved his little brigade across the ravine to flank the whole rebel army. But it was not recklessness which led him to take this chance. It was the ready judgment of the trained leader which gave him that prescient knowledge which passes for good fortune. Hancock knew what he could expect from his men, and he had confidence in himself. He was not disappointed, nor did he disappoint the country whose anxious attention was then centred upon the advance of the army of the Potomac up the Peninsula.

In his telegraphed report of this battle, made to President Lincoln, General McClellan said: "Hancock was superb." All who saw his tall figure dashing down the hill, leading his troops against the advancing army

of Early and Longstreet, acknowledge the accuracy of this description. In his more detailed and formal account of the battle, McClellan says: "Before Generals Smith and Nagle could reach the field of General Hancock's operations, although they moved with great rapidity, he had been confronted by a superior force. Feigning to retreat slowly, he awaited their onset, and then turned upon them, and after some terrific volleys of musketry, he charged them with the bayonet, routing and dispersing their whole force, killing, wounding and capturing from five hundred to six hundred men, he himself losing only thirty-one men.

"This was one of the most brilliant engagements of the war, and General Hancock merits the highest praise for the soldierly qualities displayed and his perfect appreciation of the vital importance of his position."

The troops with which General Hancock achieved this brilliant success were the Seventh Maine and Thirty-third New York from Davidson's brigade, which was under Hancock's command at that time, and the Sixth Maine, Forty-ninth Pennsylvania, and Fifth Wisconsin, detailed from his own brigade.

CHAPTER III.

Hancock again Brevetted for Gallantry. —His Work in the Preliminaries of the Peninsular Campaign. — His Care of his Men. — Military Discipline. — Skirmishing and Foraging. — Raids upon the Virginia Farms. — The Foragers' return to Camp with Spoils of War. — Mr. Vollin. — Capturing a Sleeping Beauty.

It was for the bravery and skill shown in these earlier battles of the Peninsular Campaign that General Hancock received the brevet rank of Major in the regular army. Indeed, his merit and his capacity were promptly recognized at the War Department; and the honors which the regular service confers only for substantial achievements came thick and fast. Before the campaign was over, Hancock had received his third brevet since Churubusco, and held the honorary rank of Colonel in the United States army.

During his early connection with the Army of the Potomac, he was a busy commander. All his energies were taxed to their utmost to prepare his troops for active duty; and how well this was done, their valiant service in critical periods subsequently testified. Without effective troops, Hancock could never have won the wonderful successes that he did; without Hancock's faithful and skilful labor, his troops could never have been brought to such a degree of efficiency.

He was a strict disciplinarian, but nothing of a martinet. He exacted from those under him the same

implicit and prompt obedience to orders which he himself rendered to his superiors; but he was, at the same time, the kindliest, most sympathetic, and most inspiring of commanders. All who served under him came to love and even worship him, such was the admiration he excited; his subordinates prized his smile as highly as they dreaded his reproof.

That part of Virginia in which the Army of the Potomac was operating was aflame with rebellion. There, too, the first pinching necessities of the war were felt. The country was transformed into a camp, where every male capable of bearing arms was held to be a soldier, and every crop was regarded as pledged to the support of the Southern troops. Parties of the Confederate cavalry scoured the country for recruits and for provisions. Every farm-house was an outpost of the enemy, or even an arsenal. Every tramp was a spy in disguise. Every bush might afford concealment for a sharp-shooter.

It was a desultory sort of warfare during the earlier part of the campaign, but not devoid of incident. A few weeks after General Hancock had assumed command of his brigade at the front, a scouting-party, sent out along the roads leading to Fairfax Court House and Hunter's Mills, encountered an equal number of Confederate cavalry on similar business. They immediately gave chase, the rebels taking to the woods. In the hurry of the pursuit, while passing through a fruit-orchard, they did not observe that one of the rebels had dismounted and concealed himself behind a tree; whence, resting his revolver against a branch, he fired

three shots at the Major commanding the Union scouts. The bullets missed their mark. But when, returning from their unsuccessful pursuit of the rebels, they found this man endeavoring to make his escape, they "gathered him in," as the army phrase was, and brought him before the General at headquarters. Hancock at once recognized him as a notorious spy, through whose successful operations in our lines the enemy had received important and damaging information.

"Your name is Vollin, I believe?" inquired the General.

"Yes, sir," answered the spy, taken off his guard by the quick recognition and sharp interrogatory.

"Ah! Mr. Vollin, I am glad to see you; we have been looking for you for some time."

Vollin was not long left in doubt as to the consequences of his actions. Hancock was never cruel; but he was unflinching in executing the laws of war.

"You are aware of the fate prescribed for spies, Mr. Vollin?" continued the General.

"I suppose I am," stammered the unfortunate fellow.

"Then you will please prepare for it at your earliest convenience. Good morning, sir."

The Maine and Wisconsin men in Hancock's brigade possessed a wonderful talent for the somewhat difficult and delicate work of procuring supplies. The army, to a considerable extent, subsisted upon the country. To be sure, the Confederate troops scoured it pretty thoroughly; and they had this advantage—that the Virginia farmers of that section were Southern

FORAGING PARTY.

patriots, not Northern ones, and were more readily induced by them to contribute of their stores.

But Hancock's men were active. They were largely country-bred, and knew by instinct where the poultry and the live-stock would be found, even amid the unfamiliar surroundings of a Virginia farm. This instinct they cultivated by constant forays from camp through the farms for miles around, bringing in hay, corn, sheep, and beef-cattle as spoils of war for the subsistence of the invaders. Nor were delicacies wanting. The entrance into camp of a returning foraging party, with chickens dangling by the legs from their musket-barrels, with pigs thrown across their saddles, and with shirt-fronts decorated with fresh vegetables, or bulging with carefully-carried eggs, would be greeted with shouts of admiring merriment.

It was fun and food to our men; it was anything but that to the poor farmers who found themselves by misfortune occupying a middle position between two contending armies, each with an inordinate appetite for fresh meat and early vegetables. They were robbed on both sides. One party took their bacon in the name of Southern patriotism; the other carried off their beef in the name of Federal supremacy. Between the two, they were impoverished and ruined. Here at the North, hard as we thought the war to be, we knew nothing of its real and necessary cruelties. But, for all that, it is doubted whether the most delicate productions of our most artistic cooks ever had the flavor of one of these lean and scraggy stolen Virginia chickens, speared with a bayonet and broiled on a ramrod.

Southern historians state that at even this time Lee's army was reduced to great extremity; that there was seen the day when the Confederate chief had neither the means to cook the next meal for himself, nor to serve the next ration to his soldiers. Large foraging parties were sent out, and as these frequently met those of the Union army on the same errand, some important skirmishes resulted. It was on one of these occasions that Ord met Stuart and routed his four regiments and a six-gun battery.

General Hancock's brigade also took part in the frequent reconnoissances that were required at this time, often taking on the form of a considerable march, and usually involving a skirmish which sometimes had almost the character of a battle.

On one of these occasions, after a detachment of Hancock's command had driven a small body of Confederates across the York River, they proceeded, under orders, as usual in such cases, to search the neighboring houses, all being presumptively occupied by rebel sympathizers, and possibly having granted shelter to some of the enemy. As the men entered one of these houses, they were accosted by the housewife:

"What do you want?"

"We are looking for Johnnies, madam."

"Well, there ain't none in this house, an' you better clear out quick."

"It is our orders to search every house, madam, and we cannot leave until we have searched yours."

"Search my house! I'd like to see Yankees do that!"

"You shall have that pleasure," was the reply, as some of the troops went down cellar, and others examined the ground floor.

"Now we will go up stairs," said the officer in command.

"Well, if you will, you must. But you won't find nobody up there but a poor old sick one."

"Is it a sick man?"

"No, it ain't. It's my husband's aunt Betty; been sick going on ten years."

"Where is she?"

"Up chamber there."

Up they went, and there, as the woman said, they found a bed-ridden crone. But the form which the bedclothes outlined was more extended and ample than the shape of an old woman would warrant; and modestly turning down the coverlet, they disclosed an armed Confederate, lying at length with his boots on. The boys named him at once the "Sleeping Beauty," and gathered him in.

Hancock's brigade, during the preliminary week of the Peninsular Campaign, bore its share of the labors, and claimed its share of the sports and humors of the camp, the march, and the foray; and it was in splendid condition when its gallant leader took it into battle. Such a test as that at Williamsburg could be successfully borne only by troops who had learned to have confidence in their commander, and who had by him been brought to a high state of military efficiency.

CHAPTER IV.

The Advance toward Richmond.— General Hancock's Letter to his Mother.— Battle of the Chickahominy.— Golding's Farm.— Hancock repulses Toombs' Assault.— He holds the Enemy at Bay at White Oak Swamp.—The Seven Days' Retreat to Harrison's Landing.

HANCOCK having decided the day at Williamsburg, and turned the enemy in flight toward Richmond, the advance of McClellan's grand army was made with such rapidity as the horrible condition of the roads would permit. Those who have experienced it do not need to be told what Virginia mud is. Those who have not known it by experience can never realize it by description. It is deep, treacherous, and tenacious. It pervades everything. To walk in it is a toil of Hercules. To ride is a constant misery. To drive a vehicle is to plough through sticky soil to the depth of the axles.

Through this mud, reinforced by the heavy rains of the season, the Army of the Potomac was advanced along the line of the retreating Confederates. A base of supplies was established at White House, on the Pamunkey River, and, slowly repairing the line of the York River and Richmond Railroad, the column was pushed on in that section. By the 21st of May they had reached the Chickahominy River, behind which Johnston had retired with the purpose of making an

aggressive demonstration at this point, with all the force he could command from Richmond. We find General Hancock writing home about this time:—

IN CAMP NEAR RICHMOND,
May 23, 1862.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—I wrote to father a few days ago. It has been some time since I heard from him or you. I presume some of your letters have missed me in consequence of the changes of the field.

I am well, and so also is brother John. We are not in Richmond yet; but trust we shall be there, all in good time.

I hope that God in his good mercy will permit both your sons to reach that city in safety and in honor.

I have not much time to write. Give my best love to father; and believe me,

Your devoted son,
WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

Here the tide of war took a turn. The country just beyond the Chickahominy was the limit of the advance of the Union arms in this direction toward Richmond. From May into June there were skirmishes, demonstrations, and slow manœuvres; toward the end of June came the famous "seven days" and the retreat. In all these movements, Hancock fought among the foremost. His brigade continued in General Smith's division, now a part of a new provisional army corps, in command of Gen. W. B. Franklin, posted on the right of the main body. In the pestilential swamps of the Chickahominy his labors were arduous; and, sharing the dangers and fatigues of all the principal attacks, he rendered impor-

tant aid in the retreat, by conducting the safe withdrawal of the men under his command.

The battle of the Chickahominy, June 27, was followed by the engagements of Golding's Farm, Savage Station, White Oak Swamp, and the retreat to Harrison's Landing, on successive days. General Hancock was prominent in all these fights, his brigade usually occupying the post of danger, and gaining new honors for bravery and persistence.

At Golding's Farm, Hancock sustained and repulsed an attack of the enemy in force. The closing part of the fight showed on Hancock's part the tactics which he practised first at Williamsburg, and for which he became famous. That is, he held his position tenaciously until the critical moment in the attack of the enemy arrived, and then carried demoralization before him by an impetuous charge. The best and most thoroughly disciplined troops can hardly stand under such a stroke; but to accomplish this movement, it is necessary that the commander should have the full confidence of his men. The secret of gaining and holding this confidence was possessed by Hancock. It was that the commander should share the peril of his troops and be seen by them. When a brigade commander, he was always among his men, riding up and down close behind his line of battle, encouraging them by voice and example, and not only sharing their danger, but taking yet greater risk than that to which he required them to expose themselves. As he rose in rank, he continued the same practice, trusting less to his aids than perhaps any other general officer, but pushing his

orders through his personal presence, here, there, and everywhere over the field. He was always at the critical point at the critical moment, and his troops always knew that they were fighting under the eye of a commander who did not know what fear was, and who would tolerate it in no one else.

In illustration of this trait of character, the story is told of one of his subordinate officers, who, when he had his men in a tight place, rode up to the General, and said:

"General, my men are all being killed; may I not withdraw them a little out of the fire?"

"No," replied Hancock, "I hope we shall be able to advance soon."

"Then we shall all be killed," despondingly replied the officer.

"Very well," said Hancock, "return to your troops, and if you fall you will have the satisfaction of knowing you have died for your country."

The fight of Golding's Farm was remarkable from the fact that it extended into the night. The scene of the contest, with the opposing forces blazing away at each other at close quarters all along the line, is described as one of the finest spectacles of the war.

It was now no longer a question of taking Richmond, but of making a safe retreat to the James River, with a victorious enemy in the rear; and the metal of Hancock and his troops was tested under these most trying circumstances. The next assault which he had to sustain in protecting the rear of the retreat, was at Garnett's Hill. It was the purpose of the Confederates to force him

back and separate his command from the main body of the army. The attack was opened with a heavy artillery fire of grape, shell, round shot, and shrapnel; succeeding which, General Toombs led the assault of five regiments of Confederate infantry upon Hancock's force. The fight became almost hand to hand. It was short and sharp, and ended in repulse of the Confederates. On the following morning, Toombs returned to the attack, but was again repulsed with heavy loss, Hancock holding the enemy in check at this point until he was able to make connection with the remainder of his division. The day after, June 29, he was engaged in similar hot work at Savage Station.

The line of retreat to the James passed across White Oak Swamp, and Keyes' corps, which was in advance, had made the passage on the 28th, followed by the long train of five thousand wagons, and twenty-five hundred beef-cattle, all of which had to cross the morass by one narrow defile.

Hancock's brigade had to protect this passage from the assault of the Confederate troops, hurried forward and massed in the rear of the retreating army. Sixty pieces of rebel artillery were posted on the other side of the ravine, whose opposite bank Hancock occupied, and poured their fire upon his men. The Confederate position could not be attacked, and no reply could be made to this terrible bombardment, except by two or three of the Union batteries. Hancock's men, moreover, had for three days been marching by night and fighting by day, and were worn out by fatigue and loss of sleep. In such circumstances the best troops are

liable to give way under the demoralizing effect of a heavy, concentrated, and continuous fire of artillery; and the fact that these troops endured it without flinching, told volumes of their bravery and discipline. Hancock held his position throughout the day, sustaining the artillery fire and repelling the attacks of the infantry, until the last wagon of the immense train of the retreating army was safely across the swamp.

In the same arduous services General Hancock continued until the Peninsular Campaign came to an end, four days after, by the arrival of McClellan's army at Harrison's Landing. He had mounted another step on the ladder of patriotic fame, and won his brevet of Colonel in the regular army "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the Peninsular Campaign."

CHAPTER V.

Pope's Campaign in Northern Virginia.— Hancock joins in the Movement to Centreville.— McClellan's Maryland Campaign against Lee.— Hancock at South Mountain.— Forcing Crampton's Pass.— Antietam.— Hancock takes Command of a Division.— His First Connection with the Second Army Corps.

The Army of the Potomac having returned from its unsuccessful attempt to reach Richmond by forcing its path up the Peninsula, the following month of August was chiefly occupied with auxiliary operations. General Pope's campaign in Northern Virginia, so weak and disastrous, covers most of the military events of this month. General Hancock took a subsidiary part in this campaign, marching with his brigade to Centreville in support of one of Pope's blundering movements.

This was a dark day for the country. Not only had the attempt to reach Richmond failed, but Pope's following campaign, conducted with such a profusion of boastful and glowing despatches and proclamations, had resulted disastrously. The North was despondent; the South was exultant. Lee had proved his strength to hold the Confederate territory against all invaders; now he purposed reversing the situation and becoming an invader himself.

It is doubtful whether, when he set his columns in motion from Richmond, he intended to carry the Confederate flag across the river that formed the dividing

line between the warring powers. It is certain that his army was wretchedly equipped and poorly provided. Lee himself says that thousands of his troops at this time were destitute of shoes. But, whether induced by incorrect representations of the popular feeling in Maryland, which Lee thought would lead the people to flock into his army as soon as he set foot on Northern soil, or for whatever reason, the whole Confederate army crossed the Potomac at Leesburg, by the fords near that place, in three days, between the 4th and 7th of September, 1862, and encamped in the vicinity of Frederick. There the standard of revolt was formally raised, and the people of Maryland were invited by proclamation of General Lee to join the Confederate force.

Lee was disappointed when no recruits came. The ragged and shoeless condition of his troops operated strongly to quench the enthusiasm for service in the cause of the Confederacy. But there he was, across the border; and the moral effect, as well as the military necessities of the campaign, required that he should hold his position. He could not retreat without at least measuring strength with the powerful army which he knew must be sent to repel his invasion.

So it was that the Maryland campaign came into existence. When the shattered battalions that survived General Pope's disastrous campaign in Northern Virginia returned to Washington, President Lincoln requested General McClellan to resume command of the Army of the Potomac, which was increased in numbers by the addition of other corps. "McClellan's reappearance at the head of affairs," says Swinton,

'had the most beneficial effect on the army, whose *morale* immediately underwent an astonishing change. The heterogeneous mass, made up of the aggregation of the remnants of the two armies and the garrison of Washington, was reorganized into a compact body,—a work that had mostly to be done while the army was on the march; and as soon as it became known that Lee had crossed the Potomac, McClellan moved toward Frederick to meet him."

It was Lee's plan to dislodge the Union forces from Harper's Ferry before concentrating his army west of the mountains, and his arrangements and orders were all made for this enterprise. But, through a stroke of good fortune, a copy of Lee's order for the movement of troops fell into McClellan's hands, on the day of his arrival at Frederick, and forthwith there began a race for Harper's Ferry. The South Mountain range had to be passed by the Union army, and toward the two principal passes, Turner's Gap and Crampton's Gap, the columns hastened. Lee had information of McClellan's movements, and had sent troops to the passes to meet them. Our men found the Confederates in possession, and forthwith proceeded to break through. Hancock was with Franklin's corps at Crampton's Pass, six miles below Turner's Gap, where the other column was forcing its passage and where the gallant Reno was killed. It was hot work where Hancock was as well. The rebel General McLaws held the pass under orders not to permit the passage, "even if he lost his last man in doing it;" and he held it well. But the forces under Hancock, whose duty it was to advance

along the left of the road through the steep and narrow pass, drove back the Confederates from their position at the base of the mountain where they were protected by a stone wall, and forced them back up the slope of the mountain to near its summit. Here Hancock and his determined fellow-soldiers fought for three hours, until the crest was carried and four hundred prisoners taken.

The battle of South Mountain was won, though at great cost, and not soon enough to save Harper's Ferry, which surrendered to the enemy the very morning that the relieving army burst through the passes of South Mountain, with Hancock at the front.

As the Confederates retired on the morning of the 15th of September, McClellan pushed forward his whole army in pursuit; but after a few miles' march the heads of the columns were brought to a sudden halt at Antietam Creek, where, on the heights crowning the west bank of the stream, Lee had taken his stand to oppose McClellan's pursuit. It was absolutely necessary for him to make a stand and give battle here, and he was ready to do it.

Late in the afternoon of the 15th, the Union army drew up before the Antietam, and there rested over night. On the following day there was an artillery duel and some considerable skirmishing. On the 17th the great battle was fought, contested with an obstinacy which certified the valor of both sides, and ending in a victory of which the honors were almost as great for the vanquished as for the victors. From five o'clock in the morning until seven o'clock at night the armies

contended with great slaughter. At the time, all who participated in it were fully convinced that they fought the greatest battle of the war; and, indeed, it was the bloodiest and the most hotly contested up to that time.

Both armies were almost exhausted when the sun went down. An army correspondent told the story of the situation at the close in this way: —

"McClellan's glass for the last half-hour has seldom been turned away from the left. He sees clearly enough that Burnside is pressed — needs no message to tell him that. His face grows darker with anxious thought. Looking down into the valley where fifteen hundred troops are lying, he turns a half-questioning look on Fitz John Porter who stands by his side, gravely scanning the field. They are Porter's troops below; are fresh, and only impatient to share in this fight. But Porter slowly shakes his head, and one may believe that the same thought is passing through the minds of both generals. 'They are the only reserves of the army; they cannot be spared.'

"McClellan mounts his horse, and with Porter and a dozen officers of his staff rides away to the left in Burnside's direction. It is easy to see that the moment has come when everything may turn on one order given or withheld, when the history of the battle is only to be written in thoughts and purposes and words of the general.

"Burnside's messenger rides up. His message is: 'I want troops and guns. If you do not send them, I cannot hold my position half an hour.' McClellan's only answer for a moment is a glance at the western sky. Then he turns and speaks very slowly: 'Tell General Burnside this is the battle of the war. He must hold his ground till dark at any cost. I will send him Miller's battery. I can do nothing more; I

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have no infantry.' Then, as the messenger was riding away, he called him back: 'Tell him if he *cannot* hold his ground, then the bridge, to the last man! Always the bridge! If the bridge is lost, all is lost.'

"The sun is already down; not half an hour of daylight is left. Till Burnside's message came it had seemed plain to every one that the battle could not be finished to-day. None suspected, how near was the peril of defeat, of sudden attack on exhausted forces — how vital to the safety of the army and the country were those fifteen hundred waiting troops of Fitz John Porter in the hollow. But the rebels halted instead of pushing on; their vindictive cannonade died away as the light faded. Before it was quite dark the battle was over. Only a solitary gun thundered against the enemy, and presently this also ceased, and the field was still."

There was great slaughter among the troops, and havoc among their generals. The sun went down in blood. But here it was, on this sanguinary field, that Hancock won his next promotion. General Richardson, commanding the first division of the Second Corps, was mortally wounded, and Hancock was ordered to take his place in the field, and fight the battle where Richardson was struck down.

From this time dates General Hancock's connection with the old Second Army Corps which has become historic. His name and his fame are inseparably connected with the corps which carried as its emblem the clover-leaf, omen of good-luck. They came together amid the shrieking bullets of Antietam, and they earned glory together through the war.

CHAPTER VI.

Fredericksburg.— Opening the Campaign of the Rappahannock.— Burnside succeeds McClellan.— Hancock receives his Commission as Major-General of Volunteers.— He Commands a Division on the March to Fredericksburg.— The Bloody Fight in the "Slaughter-Pen."—Hancock Wounded.

THE Confederate campaign in Maryland came to an end with the battle of Antietam, in which Hancock so distinguished himself. It lasted just two weeks; and instead of passing into history as an invasion, it degenerated into a raid. While its purpose was to raise the standard of revolt in Maryland and rally the citizens of that State about the Confederate flag, it resulted in the almost complete destruction of Lee's army. Instead of receiving flocks of recruits from the rebel sympathizers in Maryland, Lee saw his own forces dwindling away so rapidly that he was forced to confess that his army was "ruined by straggling." In his official report, he says: — "The arduous service in which our troops had been engaged, their great privations of rest and food, and the long marches without shoes over mountain roads, had greatly reduced our ranks before the action [at Antietam] began. These causes had compelled thousands of brave men to absent themselves, and many more had done so from unworthy motives. This great battle was fought by less than forty thousand men on our side." After Antie-

tam, Lee was quite ready to get back across the Potomac, taking with him less than thirty thousand of the seventy thousand troops with which he had entered Maryland.

A short period of rest for the Army of the Potomac followed the battle of Antietam, in which General Hancock had for the first time assumed command of a division; but when it became necessary to make a reconnoissance in force from Harper's Ferry to Charlestown, Va., it was naturally the dashing and successful Hancock who was ordered to lead the way. This was done about the middle of October, Hancock striking the line of the enemy, and driving him with the sharp fighting and the indomitable persistence for which he was already distinguished. Following this reconnoissance, McClellan crossed the Potomac about five miles below Harper's Ferry, this movement ending his command, General Burnside being appointed to take his place.

Burnside's plan was to advance on Richmond by way of Fredericksburg; and to accomplish this he proposed to move by the north bank of the Rappahannock to Falmouth, nearly opposite to Fredericksburg, then cross the river by a pontoon bridge, and seize the bluffs on the south bank. The advance was made in three columns, Hancock being on the extreme right of the line. The discipline of his troops was as perfect as when he was in command of a much smaller force, and he made the march in good order, passing rapidly in advance of the main body, fording rivers and crossing hills and valleys while leading the way.

One who made this march with Hancock thus describes it:—"The country from the Potomac to the Rappahannock presented the usual features of Virginia scenery. Tall chimneys standing, monuments of departed peace, in the midst of wastes that had once been farms. Not a cow, or chicken or pig, or any living or movable thing that had been the property of the inhabitants. One nest of squalid children staring from a forlorn cabin. A few dead horses and mules beside the roads. Six-mule army wagons, with blaspheming drivers, whooping, lashing and cursing their way through the river, which is red as if it had all been soaked in their blood. Long processions of cavalry winding their way, like caravans, through the Virginian Sahara. The dismantled huts of deserted encampments, the camp-fires still smoking, showing that the troops were just put in motion. The tents and wigwams of the guards along the road, looking, in the chill wind that came down the ravines through hills spattered with snow, dismally uncomfortable."

It was while this movement was in progress that Hancock received his commission as Major-General of Volunteers. This promotion was in recognition of the gallantry and ability shown by Hancock in the preceding campaign of the Army of the Potomac.

Thus confirmed in his position as division commander, General Hancock led his troops through the war-swept fields of Virginia to Fredericksburg. Arriving near Falmouth, on the opposite bank of the Rappahannock, he halted his division in a sheltered valley and gave his men the rest they needed before engaging in the terrible conflict that was before them.

But when the time for action arrived, Hancock was in the advance. On the night of the 12th of December, 1862, he moved forward and crossed the river. When his force reached the position assigned it, directly in front of the enemy, the men were ankle-deep in mud, and the frosty winds of the Virginia winter were sweeping down the valley of the Rappahannock and chilling them to the bone. Yet so perfect was the discipline which Hancock maintained, that, while camp-fires were forbidden, the wet and cold ranks kept their positions in the line; and together, officers and men, Hancock at their head, lay down under the inclement sky and tried to sleep.

The battle began at daybreak of December 13. Hancock's force was at the front, and remained there through the long and bloody action. His behavior on this occasion was in keeping with the high reputation he had achieved. With his division, he was in the hottest of the fight, leading his men as far as it was possible for men to go, and falling back with them only when attempt to go further was foolhardy and useless. Every attempt made by the enemy to break through Hancock's line was immediately repulsed, and his men halted on the march through the upper parts of the city only to form a more perfect line, and do the more execution in the attack.

Here, as everywhere else, Hancock seemed to bear a charmed life. He passed through the "slaughter-pen," as our men used to call the position they occupied in this fight, with only a slight flesh-wound across the abdomen, coming out otherwise unharmed, though with his uniform perforated by the enemy's bullets.

An eye-witness describes the advance of Hancock's division in this battle: "That which I saw was a massive line of blue-jackets standing in the mist of their own musketry, surging forward and swaying backward, only to push on again, under a fire of artillery and musketry such that I was amazed it did not absolutely sweep them from the face of the earth; and so utterly idle did it seem for our men to be wasted in endeavoring to breast such a storm, that it would have been a relief to see them fall back into the town, and give up the unfair and horrible contest. The discharges of musketry at intervals were excessively furious, rapid beyond computation, and the sound must be remarked as far more terrible than that of artillery. While our artillery was silent, and that of the enemy was jarring the earth, and filling the valley of the Rappahannock with crashing reverberations, our noble infantry maintained for hours a line of fire across the field, the smoke rolling from the play of their muskets in long fleecy clouds. Presently some batteries of our field-artillery got to work, and for awhile the action did not look so one-sided. Flash answered flash, as gun responded to gun; but it was our field-guns to their siege-guns; and their batteries, with the advantages of position and number of pieces, as well as weight of metal, after a gallant contest silenced our artillery. When the enemy charged upon our men, they met their masters, and were invariably beaten back, terribly damaged. No troops in the world would have won a victory if placed in the position ours were. Few armies, however renowned, would have stood as well as ours did. It can

hardly be in human nature for men to show more valor than was found on our side that day."

The character of Hancock was at this time shown in another phase, in his care for the hospitals and for those wounded who could not reach them. The buildings selected for the hospital service were watched over with the closest care, and as safely guarded as the circumstances permitted. While wounded himself, and remaining in the heat of the battle, he constantly supervised the despatch of the wounded sufferers across the river. He fought his troops well and brought them off the bloody field of Fredericksburg in good order.

It was at the time understood, and has been ever since conceded, that the attack on Fredericksburg was a great and terrible error. Burnside, in a manly way, in his official report to the President, took all the blame on himself as the one who planned the assault, and under whose orders it was made. But, without entering upon the question of the wisdom or error of the orders of the commanding general, we can regard with pride and admiration the manner in which those orders were carried out. To show with what persistent valor Hancock labored to carry out the orders entrusted to him, it is only necessary to mention the fact, that of the five thousand men whom he led in person to the assault upon the stone wall and rifle-trenches of Longstreet at the foot of Marye's Heights, under that terrible cross-fire of shot and shell from the Confederate batteries, only three thousand returned with their wounded commander.

CHAPTER VII.

Chancellorsville.—"Fighting Joe" Hooker in command of the Army of the Potomac.—The Clover Badge.—Hancock again leads his Division across the Rappahannock.—Occupation of Chancellorsville.—Lee attacks the Position.—Hancock's Division saves the Day.—"Stonewall" Jackson's Death.—Hancock takes Command of the Second Corps.

THE slaughter of Fredericksburg was followed by the fiasco of the "Mud March," and then Burnside, having offered the President the alternative of accepting his own resignation, or at once removing a number of his corps commanders, was promptly relieved of his command, and Gen. Joseph Hooker — "Fighting Joe" — put in his place at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Hooker straightened out the tangle in which Burnside had left the army, spent the wet months in reorganizing it, and in April had it in good condition to move on to another day of glory — and another defeat.

It was Hooker who originated the plan of designating the several army corps by distinctive badges. The germ of the idea was the happy thought of the gallant Phil. Kearney, who, at Fair Oaks, ordered the soldiers of his division to sew a piece of red flannel to their caps, so that he could recognize them in the tumult of battle. Hooker developed this idea into a system which proved most useful during the war.

Hancock wore the trefoil, or clover-leaf, the honored badge of the Second Corps. His division was in this corps, which Couch commanded.

The two armies had faced each other all winter on opposite banks of the Rappahannock, until, in April, Hooker felt prepared to make an offensive movement. This was to turn the flank of the Confederate army, and thus compel Lee to abandon his defences along the Rappahannock. The movement was very successfully executed, so far as turning the flank and getting to Chancellorsville, Hancock's division reaching that place and bivouacking there on the night of Thursday, April 30, 1863.

This was the occasion of Hooker's boastful proclamation to the troops: "The enemy must either ingloriously fly, or come out from behind his defences and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him." He is also said to have declared in conversation: "The rebel army is now the legitimate property of the Army of the Potomac. They may as well pack up their haversacks and make for Richmond." Had success followed his movement, these boasts would have passed into history as wisdom; and at the time they were made, Hooker had every reason to consider himself able to make them good.

But comparative failure robbed them of their character. Lee at length realized what was going on upon his left flank, and at once set about remedying the matter.

Hancock's division had been sent, with that of General Sykes, to advance as the centre column on the road from Chancellorsville to Fredericksburg; being chosen,

as usual, for the post of honor and danger. They drove the enemy, and secured a commanding position on Friday, May 1. But, by one of those errors which seem so strange after the occurrence, Hooker ordered Sykes and Hancock back, in spite of protest, and made ready to accept battle at Chancellorsville.

How the Confederates, under "Stonewall" Jackson, stole around Hooker's army while Lee was engaging his attention in front; and how General Howard, with the Eleventh Corps, was beaten back in disorder, has been often told. But here it was that Hancock again saved what there was to be saved from the disaster. He interposed his division like a rock between the advancing Confederates and the demoralized Union troops; and, although he was attacked with great impetuosity, he held the enemy in check.

Always generous and prompt to recognize merit, Hancock, in his report, gives this tribute to the valor of one of his subordinates: — "On the 2d of May, the enemy frequently opened with artillery from the heights towards Fredericksburg, and from those on my right, and with infantry assaulted my advance line of rifle-pits, but was always handsomely repulsed by the troops on duty there, under Col. N. A. Miles. During the sharp contest of that day, the enemy were never able to reach my line of battle, so strongly and successfully did Colonel Miles contest the ground."

In the disposition of his forces, Hancock was, as always, personally attentive to the smallest details; and to this, equally with the valor of his subordinates, must the success of his command be attributed. He led his

troops in person, placed them in the field under his own eye, and remained to take part in the engagement. He was right among his men, holding them to work by his own presence.

At Chancellorsville he had his horse shot under him. To what dangers he and his men were exposed by the position in which they were placed in this battle, and how bravely they held their own, is indicated in the report of Colonel Morris, of the Sixty-sixth New York Regiment, in Hancock's division. "The firing," writes Colonel Morris, "was maintained for upwards of four hours, during which the enemy made repeated and determined assaults upon our lines, and was each time gallantly repulsed by our men, with severe loss. All his efforts to break our lines having proved futile, the enemy opened upon them with a terrific fire of artillery, but with no better result; every volley from the enemy's musketry, and every discharge from his cannon seeming to give renewed energy to our brave men, and to increase their determination to maintain their position at all hazards, and against any assault the enemy might be capable of making against them. There was no wasting of ammunition here; every man fired with the utmost coolness and deliberation, taking steady aim at his object as if firing for a prize; not a man flinched under the terrible fire to which he was subjected."

It was after making his attack upon the position held by Hancock, that the famous "Stonewall" Jackson received the wound that caused his death. Speaking of this while he lay dying, Jackson said: "If I had

not been wounded, I would have cut the enemy off from the road to the United States Ford; we would have had them entirely surrounded, and they would have been obliged to surrender or cut their way out."

But Lee ventured upon no strokes of audacity after Jackson had passed away; and it is not improbable that the loss of this one life permitted the Chancellorsville expedition to become only a failure, not an overwhelming defeat.

A month after this battle, General Hancock was put in command of the Second Corps, in which then for nine months he had commanded a division. His elevation to this important command gave unusual satisfaction to officers and men, who had come to know, to admire, and to trust him; and the army and the country recognized his advancement as a fairly-earned tribute to his soldierly qualities. His assignment to the command was at first temporary, occasioned by the retirement of General Couch, on the 10th of June. But events were culminating in the war for the Union, and need was of the strongest men in the highest places; and President Lincoln, June 25, confirmed General Hancock in the permanent command of the corps with which his name is so gloriously associated.

CHAPTER VIII.

The March to Gettysburg. — Lee Resolves upon an Invasion of the North. — He Ravages Pennsylvania while Halleck and Stanton hold Hooker back. — Hooker's Resignation. — The Camp on the Rappahannock broken up. — The March toward Washington. — Hancock's Corps the Rear Guard. — Perfect Discipline of his Men.

The Army of the Potomac had now twice crossed the Rappahannock, and twice had it been driven back, if not with disaster, at least without success. Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville had raised the confidence of Lee's army to the highest pitch, and had given its commander a consciousness of power which inspired him to undertake a war of invasion on his own account. The authorities at Richmond, who had always seemed to act more harmoniously than those at Washington, determined upon an offensive policy, and with Lee planned a movement that should cause the Army of the Potomac to loose its hold upon the Rappahannock, and should transfer the theatre of war to the loyal States.

The Confederates, moreover, having a depleted commissariat to draw upon, cast longing eyes toward the fertile fields and rich cities that lay clustering in the valleys and upon the river-banks in the great State of Pennsylvania; and, added to the hope of recruiting their exhausted supplies, was the expectation of obtaining a foothold upon the line of communications between

Washington and the North, and if successful in defeating the Union army upon Northern territory, levy tribute upon these wealthy and populous districts, and possibly dictate terms of peace that would redound to the advantage of the Confederacy.

There is no doubt as to the destitution of Lee's army at this time, or as to the influence it had upon the invasion. Shortly before the movement, according to General Longstreet, Lee sent to Richmond a requisition for a certain amount of rations. The paper came back with the Commissary-General's endorsement: "If General Lee wishes rations, let him seek them in Pennsylvania." At this time, also, Hooker's army had been weakened, by the mustering out of the short-term volunteers, until it numbered about eighty thousand effective troops, while Lee had been strengthened by a large force of conscripts.

General Hooker had, from the first, divined the purpose of Lee, and had kept both the President and Secretary Stanton informed on the subject. On the 28th of May he had written: "You may rest assured that important movements are being made. I am in doubt as to the direction Lee will take, but probably the one of last year, however desperate it may appear." But, being restrained by the orders of Halleck and Stanton from making an offensive resistance to the operations of Lee, Hooker was compelled to move into a position to protect the approaches to Washington and there await the development of the Confederate plans. Thus the course of Ewell across the border was free; the whole region of Western Pennsylvania was open to

him, and he thoroughly scoured it, levying upon the population for the subsistence of his troops, while he gathered vast herds of horses and cattle and sent them southward across the Potomac. Thousands of Pennsylvania farmers fled in panic, with their cattle and household goods, across the Susquehanna.

Thus the invasion of Northern territory by the Confederate troops became a fixed fact. Halleck and Stanton sat shivering at Washington, vetoing every plan of Hooker's looking toward a more vigorous policy, until, on the 27th of June, Hooker, in despair, asked to be relieved from the command of an army which he was not allowed to use.

Hooker recommended that General Meade be appointed to fill the place vacated by his resignation, and, true to his duty, conferred with his successor, and had long and earnest discussions with him, imparting to him all his plans, and offering any advice that might be required. The purpose of General Meade was to keep the Army of the Potomac well in hand, so that rapid concentration might be effected, and, if a general engagement was to be fought, it should be upon ground of his own selection; at the same time to watch Lee's movements, and, when a favorable opportunity offered, strike upon his communications, and by preventing a retreat cut him in pieces.

To fail to stop Lee in his invasion of Pennsylvania, meant disaster to the cause of the Union. The fate of the Republic, at that time, hung trembling in the balance. Had the Union arms suffered defeat, the loss of Washington and the prestige of the possession of the

Capital, would not have been the only loss. There would have been practically nothing to prevent the capture of Baltimore, Philadelphia, possibly New York. There would have been recognition of the Southern Confederacy by European Powers; the destruction of the Union, or, at the best, its preservation only after years of bloody war. All these probabilities hung on the success or defeat of Lee, who was now forging ahead on Northern soil, toward the North Star and expected victory. Not to intercept him; not to strike him at a place where the Union troops would have the advantage or an equality of position; or, having struck Lee, to fail to overwhelm him — and all those results were possible — and the cause of the Union was lost.

Probably every private soldier in the Army of the Potomac knew that a tremendous conflict was not many hours distant, and had some clear idea of what failure meant. But there were some on whom rested supreme responsibility. With them there must be neither mediocrity as to ability, judgment, or execution. With them there must be no mistake, or all would be lost. Chief among the men on whom was laid this momentous duty was Hancock. How he performed it the country knows.

It was on the 13th of June that Hooker, who at that time still retained his command of the Army of Potomac, broke his camp on the Rappahannock, and moved after Lee in the direction of Washington. General Mulholland, then holding a command in Hancock's corps, thus describes the breaking up and the start on the long march: —

"When on that lovely summer evening in June, 1863, we looked for the last time on Marye's Heights and the monument of Washington's mother, which had been shattered and broken by the shells of both armies, and stood out there on the plain back of the city, as though protesting against this fratricidal strife, a mute and sorrowful Niobe weeping for the misfortunes of her children, every heart beat with a quickened throb, and all the men rejoiced to leave the scenes of the last six months. We withdrew from the line of the river after the shades of night had fallen over the landscape; and it seemed to be an appropriate hour, for had not the great army, while here, been in shadow, without a ray of sunshine to gladden our souls? and we had been here so long, we were beginning to be forgotten as the Army of the Potomac, and letters came to us marked, 'Army of the Rappahannock.' As we marched away in the darkness, our joy was not unmingled with sorrow; for was there a veteran in the ranks who did not leave behind the graves of noble and well-beloved comrades, who had fought beside him from the beginning of the great struggle? We did not march away with all the army. When our camp fires — which on this night burned with unusual brightness — went out and left the valley of the Rappahannock in darkness, the living army was gone, to be sure; but twenty-five thousand of our members lay over on the other side of the river — the heroes of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville: — an army of occupation, indeed; the corps of honor, forming a great and permanent camp — the bivouac of the dead."

General Hancock's corps held the position of rear guard, and its route to Gettysburg was over two hundred miles in length. Some days they marched fifteen, on others eighteen miles: and on June 29 this corps completed the longest march made by any infantry

during the war, leaving Frederick City, Md., in the morning and halting at 11 o'clock at night two miles beyond Uniontown, a distance of thirty-four miles. This march was one of the severest as well as the longest of the war. "On one day," writes General Mulholland, "I think the second out from Falmouth, our corps lost more than a dozen men from sunstroke; they fell dead by the wayside. On another day we crossed the battle-field of Bull Run, where the year before Pope had met with disastrous defeat. No effort had been made to bury the dead properly; a little earth, which the rain had long ago washed away, had been thrown over them where they fell, and their bodies, or rather their skeletons, now lay exposed to view. In some parts of the field they were in groups, in other places singly, and in all possible positions. One cavalryman lay outstretched, with skeleton hand still grasping his trusted sword. Another, half-covered with earth, the flesh still clinging to his lifeless bones, and hand extended as if to greet us. We rested for a short time on the field, and one of the regiments of our brigade (the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts) halted on the very spot on which they had fought the year previously, and recognized the various articles lying around as belonging to their own dead."

Under the thorough discipline of General Hancock, the Second Corps made this march bravely, in the heat of the broiling sun of the hottest month of our year; each man with his load of fifty-seven pounds —musket, ammunition, knapsack, shelter-tent and blanket—and each anxious to keep up with his regi-

ment lest he should lose the fight. And, such was the respect for the rights of civilians and of property, inspired in these men by their gallant commander, that not an act of wantonness was committed on that weary advance. There is not an inhabitant on all that line of march, who can tell of a single act of vandalism by any of the men, such as we are wont to hear of other armies. In the rich and cultivated country through which they passed, life and property were respected as much as though it were in the halcyon days of peace. Old and young came to the roadside to see the army pass, and knew they were safe from insult or molestation. The fields of ripening grain waved untrampled when the corps had gone by, the men even going out of their way to avoid the gardens lest they should step upon the flowers.

In this way Hancock brought up the rear of the Army of the Potomac, as it moved from the Rappahannock toward the then uncelebrated field of Gettysburg.

CHAPTER IX.

Gettysburg.— The First Day.— Meade arrives at Taneytown.— The Advance Guard strikes the Enemy.— "For God's Sake send up Hancock."— Meade puts Hancock in command at the Front.— He arrives at the Critical Moment and Saves the Army.— He Selects the Battle-ground and Disposes the Troops.— Meade Concentrates his Army for the Fight of the Second Day.

HANCOCK was now marching, all unconscious of the fact, toward the field on which he, by the exercise of his soldierly qualities and skill, was to turn the fortunes of the great battle of the Rebellion in favor of the Union arms. For, with no derogation of the merits of the other brave men and skilful commanders who fought through those terrible three days at Gettysburg, it is only just to Hancock to let the record show the fact that it was his magnetic presence which rallied the beaten and flying commands of Howard and Sickles, his skill which so disposed those forces as to hold the position against the Confederate army, and his clear foresight and quick decision, which marked out the battle-ground on which Meade's victory was to be won.

The battle of Gettysburg was not definitely foreseen or pre-arranged on either side. Lee was striking for Harrisburg; Meade was hastening to intercept him, and had planned to give him battle on Pipe Creek. As Lee writes in his official report of the Gettysburg campaign: "Preparations were now made to advance upon

Harrisburg; but on the night of the 28th of June, information was received from a scout that the Federal army, having crossed the Potomac, was advancing northward, and that the head of the column had reached South Mountain. As our communications with the Potomac were thus menaced, it was resolved to prevent his further progress in that direction by concentrating our army on the east side of the mountains."

While Lee was making this movement, the left wing of Meade's army, under General Reynolds, which was thrown forward in advance to serve as a mask while position was taken on Pipe Creek, came in contact with the van of the rebel General Hill's command on the morning of July 1, just outside the town of Gettysburg.

This accident determined the battle-field, and the result of the contest of that first day was to determine which side should have the choice in the disposition of troops, and consequently the advantage in the great struggle between the grand armies.

It was Hancock who was chosen to decide this in favor of the Union.

Meade's headquarters, with the main body of his troops, was at Taneytown, fourteen miles from Gettysburg. There the rear guard, Hancock's corps, arrived, and was massed on the morning of July 1, 1863. The great battle had already begun at Gettysburg, and while Meade was consulting with Hancock, and explaining to him his plans for the expected battle, the force of the Confederate army was concentrating upon the devoted corps in advance. The gallant Reynolds had already

fallen, and Buford, after making a wonderful resistance with his small force of cavalry against enormous hordes of infantry, had hastily scratched a despatch to Meade in the note-book of his signal officer: "For God's sake send up Hancock. Everything is going at odds, and we need a controlling spirit."

Hancock was the "controlling spirit" and wise adviser to whom all turned when in danger. Meade at once sent him with orders to assume command of all the troops at Gettysburg, and to report upon its advantages as a field of battle. In his testimony before the committee on the conduct of the war, General Meade says: —

"About one or two o'clock in the day (July 1) I received information that the advance of my army, under Major-General Reynolds of the First Corps, on their reaching Gettysburg, had encountered the enemy in force, and that the First and Eleventh Corps were at that time engaged in a contest with such portions of the enemy as were there.

"The moment I received this information, I directed Major-General Hancock, who was with me at the time, to proceed without delay to the scene of the contest, and make an examination of the ground in the neighborhood of Gettysburg, and to report to me the facilities and advantages or disadvantages of that ground for receiving battle. I furthermore instructed him that in case, upon his arrival at Gettysburg, he should find the position unsuitable, and the advantages on the side of the enemy, he should examine the ground critically as he went out there, and report to me the nearest position in the immediate neighborhood of Gettysburg, where a concentration of the army would be more advantageous than at Gettysburg."

Hardly had the news of the unexpected engagement reached General Meade's headquarters, when another cloud of dust was seen approaching on the road from Gettysburg. Out of it galloped another staff officer, bringing the sad story of the death of Reynolds and carrying the urgent appeal from Buford to send on Hancock. General Meade says:—

"At one o'clock I received the sad intelligence of the fall of General Reynolds, and the actual engagement of my troops at Gettysburg. Previous to receiving this intelligence I had had a long consultation with General Hancock, and explained to him fully my views as to my determination to fight in front, if practicable; if not, then to the rear or to the right or left, as circumstances might require. Anxious to have some one at the front who could carry out my views, I directed General Hancock to proceed to Gettysburg and take command of the troops there, and particularly to advise me of the condition of affairs there, and the practicability of fighting a battle there."

It is a curious coincidence that, almost one hundred years before this eventful day, the grandfather of General Hancock, an officer in Washington's army, was detailed to command the escort which left this same little village of Taneytown, in charge of a company of prisoners taken from Burgoyne, to take them to Valley Forge.

As there has been some controversy as to the fact of who was in command at Gettysburg, and who saved the army — and thereby doubtless saved the country — by rallying the demoralized and flying columns and securing the position for the battle of the following

day, the order of General Meade, under which Hancock assumed command, is here given: —

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC,
July 1, 1863 — 1.10 P. M.

COMMANDING OFFICER, SECOND CORPS:

The Major-General commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed or badly wounded. He directs you to turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon; that you proceed to the front, and, by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General Reynolds's death, you assume command of the corps there assembled; viz., the Eleventh, First, and Third at Emmettsburg. If you think the ground and position there a better one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, you will so advise the General, and he will order all troops up. You know the General's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

D. BUTTERFIELD,
Major-General and Chief of Staff.

To understand the importance of the trust thus placed in Hancock's hands, it must be understood that General Meade had already chosen a place for the expected battle, and that he left it absolutely to Hancock's judgment whether his plans should be entirely changed. Also, General Meade, at this supreme moment, did not hesitate to place Hancock in command over Howard, his senior. It was no time for etiquette. The fate of the army was at stake, and Hancock was everywhere recognized as the one who

could save it. On the point of superseding his two seniors, Howard and Sickles, General Hancock says: "I did not feel much embarrassment about it, because I was an older soldier than either of them. But I knew, legally, it was not proper, and if they chose to resist it, it might be a troublesome matter to me for the time being."

The moment General Hancock received the above order, he turned over the command of his corps to General Gibbon and started with his staff for the battle-field.

As General Hancock proceeded to the front he rode part of the way in an ambulance, so that he might examine the maps of the country, his aid, Maj. W. G. Mitchell, galloping ahead to announce his coming to Howard, whom he found on Cemetery Hill, and to whom he told his errand, giving him to understand that General Hancock was coming up to take command.

At half-past three o'clock General Hancock rode up to General Howard, informed him that he had come to take command and asked him if he wished to see his written orders. Howard answered: "No! no! Hancock, go ahead!"

At this moment our defeat seemed to be complete. Our troops were flowing through the streets of the town in great disorder, closely pursued by the Confederates, the retreat fast becoming a rout, and in a very few minutes the enemy would be in possession of Cemetery Hill, the key to the position; and the battle of Gettysburg would have gone into history as a rebel

victory. But what a change came over the scene in the next half-hour. The presence of Hancock, like that of Sheridan, was magnetic.

Schwerin and Saxe were said to be worth each a reinforcement of ten thousand men to an army; and the Duke of Wellington said the arrival of Napoleon on a battle-field was a better reinforcement to the French army than the accession of forty thousand fresh troops. What, then, shall we say of the value of General Hancock's arrival at the critical moment on the battle-field of Gettysburg, a battle that by common consent is now admitted to have decided the fate of the Union and fixed the final result of the war?

Order came out of chaos. The flying troops halted and again faced the enemy. The battalions of Howard's corps, that were retreating down the Baltimore pike, were called back and with a cheer went into position on the crest of Cemetery Hill, where the division of Steinwehr had already been stationed. Wadsworth s division and a battery were sent to hold Culp's Hill, and Geary, with the White Star division, went on the double-quick to occupy the high ground toward Round Top. Confidence was restored, the enemy checked and, being deceived by these dispositions, ceased their attack. Hancock had saved the day.

Swinton, describing the advent of Hancock and the turn of the tide of battle under the influence of his presence, says: — "At the time the confused throng was pouring through Gettysburg, General Hancock arrived on the ground. In such an emergency it is the personal qualities of the commander alone that tell.

If, happily, there is in him that mysterious but potent magnetism that calms, subdues, and inspires, there results one of those sudden moral transformations that are among the marvels of the phenomena of battle. This quality Hancock possesses in a high degree, and his appearance soon restored order out of seemingly hopeless confusion — a confusion which Howard, an efficient officer but of a rather negative nature, had not been able to quell. Nor, fortunately, could there be any question as to the right position to be taken up, for nature had already traced it out in a bold relief of rock. On the ridge of Gettysburg — the ridge Reynolds had mentally marked as he impetuously hurried forward to buffet the advancing enemy, and which, by the rich sacrifice of his life, he purchased for the possession of the army, and for the possession of history forever — Hancock disposed the remnants of the two corps."

General Hancock was fully aware that General Meade had determined to fight the battle on the line of Pipe Creek; but noting the topographical advantages of the ground around Gettysburg, he determined to advise General Meade to fight there. He knew that this line, the crest of Cemetery Ridge, with Culp's Hill on the right, Round Top on the left, and Cemetery Hill in the centre, could not be bettered. So, when order had taken the place of confusion and our lines were once more intact, he sent his senior aid, Major Mitchell, back to tell General Meade that he could hold the position until nightfall, and that in his judgment Gettysburg was the place to fight the battle. Major Mitchell found

General Meade in the evening, near Taneytown, and communicated these views. General Meade listened attentively, and on these representations he fortunately concluded to abandon his idea of fighting on the line of Pipe Creek, and deliver the battle at Gettysburg; and turning to Gen. Seth Williams, his Adjutant-General, he said: "Order up all the troops; we will fight there."

The Second Corps promptly followed General Hancock, and required no urging to keep the men up. The regiments moved forward solidly and rapidly, and not a straggler was to be seen; but as they hurried along a halt was ordered, the ranks opened, and an ambulance passed containing the body of the heroic Gen. John F. Reynolds. Then the corps pushed on to within a few miles of the battle-ground, where it camped that night and arrived on the field early the next morning.

So it was that, on the first of the three memorable days of Gettysburg, Hancock was the means of changing defeat and disaster into success; and so it was that he designated the field on which the greatest and most momentous battle of the Union was to be fought.

CHAPTER X.

Gettysburg.— The Second Day.— Hancock in command at the Left Centre.— Sickles's Corps cut up.— Hancock to the Rescue.— The Absolution of the Irish Brigade.— Fight for the Ridge in front of the Wheat-field.— Hancock protects the Situation.— He holds the Line between Cemetery Ridge and Little Round Top.

After posting the troops, General Hancock turned over the command to General Slocum, his ranking officer, who arrived in the evening.

The morning of July 2d and the second day of the battle dawned clear and bright, and found Hancock posting the Second Corps on Cemetery Ridge. As yet no one in that corps, with the exception of the General and his staff, had heard a shot fired. As the troops approached Gettysburg the day before, the sounds of the fight, owing to the direction of the wind or the formation of the country, were wholly inaudible. Those who came upon the field after nightfall had no idea of the whereabouts of the enemy; but as the daylight increased and objects became visible, their lines were seen nearly a mile distant on Seminary Ridge, and away to the left rose Little Round Top, and still farther on Round Top.

On that morning the entire Union army, except the corps of Sedgwick, had reached Gettysburg, and the whole Southern force, except Pickett's division and Longstreet's corps, had come up. The line of battle

formed by the army was in the shape of a Limerick fish-hook; the head being Little Round Top, the point at Spangler's Spring, and the centre of the curve where the Second Corps lay, and where now repose the country's dead. This position of the Second Corps was the key to the whole line; for, once broken, both wings of the army would be separated, if not destroyed. General Longstreet says, in his version of the battle of Gettysburg, that "the enemy did not see the value of Cemetery Ridge until the arrival of Hancock."

The command of General Hancock on this day was the left centre, his Second Corps being posted in the rear as reserves. The battle did not really open until afternoon; and when it opened, Hancock, who had devoted careful attention to the disposition of his troops, seemed to be everywhere with them in the actual contest.

About 4 o'clock, there was that sharp and persistent fighting on the left, into which Sickles's corps marched so bravely and in which it suffered so terribly. Hancock was called on for aid, and he at once sent out one of his divisions,— General Caldwell's.

The Irish brigade, Col. Patrick Kelly, which had been commanded formerly by Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher, and whose green flag had been unfurled in every battle in which the Army of the Potomac had been engaged, from the first Bull Run to Appomattox, formed a part of this division. As the large majority of its members were Catholics, the chaplain of the brigade, Rev. William Corly, proposed to give a general absolution to all the men before going into

the fight. While this is customary in the armies of Catholic countries of Europe, it was perhaps the first time it was ever witnessed on this continent; unless, indeed, the grim old warrior, Ponce de Leon, as he tramped through the everglades of Florida in search of the Fountain of Youth, or De Soto on his march to the Mississippi, indulged in this act of devotion.

Father Corly stood upon a large rock in front of the brigade. Addressing the men, he explained what he was about to do, saying that each one could receive the benefit of the absolution by making a sincere act of contrition, and firmly resolving to embrace the first opportunity of confessing his sins; urging them to do their duty well, and reminding them of the high and sacred nature of their trust as soldiers, and the noble object for which they fought; ending by saying that the Catholic Church refuses Christian burial to the soldier who turns his back upon the foe or deserts his flag.

The brigade was standing at "Order arms." As he closed his address every man fell on his knees with head bowed down. Then stretching his right hand toward the brigade, Father Corly pronounced the words of the absolution: — "*Dominus noster Jesus Christus vos absolvat, et ego, auctoritate ipsius, vos absolvo ab omni vinculo excommunicationis et interdicti in quantum possum et vos indigetis, deinde ego absolvo vos a peccatis vestris in nomine Patris, et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*"

General Mulholland, speaking of this occurrence,

says:—"The scene was more than impressive; it was awe-inspiring. Near by stood Hancock, surrounded by a brillant throng of officers who had gathered to witness this very unusual occurrence; and while there was profound silence in the ranks of the Second Corps, yet over to the left, out by the peach orchard and Little Round Top, where Weed and Vincent and Haslett were dying, the roar of the battle rose and swelled and re-echoed through the woods, making music more sublime than ever sounded through cathedral aisle. The act seemed to be in harmony with all the surroundings. I do not think there was a man in the brigade who did not offer up a heartfelt prayer. For some it was their last; they knelt there in their grave-clothes—in less than half an hour many of them were numbered with the dead of July 2. Who can doubt that their prayers were good? What was wanting in the eloquence of the priest to move them to repentance was supplied in the incidents of the fight. That heart would be incorrigible, indeed, that the scream of a Whitworth bolt, added to Father Corly's touching appeal, would not move to contrition."

The contest at this point was for the ridge in front of the wheat-field, a location known to every one of the many thousands in that fight as one of the bloodiest of the second day's contest. As Caldwell's division, in response to Hancock's orders, advanced to the relief of Sickles, approaching the crest of the rugged hill, from behind the huge bowlders that were everywhere scattered around, the men of Longstreet's corps rose up and poured into the Union ranks a most destructive

fire. The lines were not more than thirty feet apart when the firing opened. Our men promptly returned the fire, and for ten or fifteen minutes the work of death went on. There was no cheering, no time lost in unnecessary movements. Every man there, both Union and rebel, was a veteran, and knew just what was wanted. They stood there face to face, loading and firing, and so close that every shot told. In a short time the brigades of Cross and Zook began forcing the enemy back, and after firing about ten minutes Colonel Kelly gave the order to charge. The men, rushing forward with a cheer, were among the Johnnies in a few moments.

Here took place a rather extraordinary scene. In an instant our men and their opponents were mingled together. In charging they had literally run right in among them. Firing instantly ceased, and they found there were as many of the enemy as there were of themselves. Officers and men looked for a time utterly bewildered; all the fighting had stopped, yet the Graybacks still retained their arms, and showed no disposition to surrender. At this moment a Union officer called out in a loud voice: "The Confederate troops will lay down their arms and go to the rear!" This ended a scene that was becoming embarrassing. The Confederates promptly obeyed, and a large number of Kershaw's brigade became our prisoners.

Of this division, the brigades of Kelly and Zook were most unfortunate. By ill-fortune they found themselves surrounded, with one rebel line of battle in front and another behind, and the only way out of the

trap was to pass down between the two rebel lines. So the two brigades started on a double-quick, firing as they ran, toward the Little Round Top, the only opening through which they could escape.

Passing through this alley of death, where the bullets came thick as hail, they got away with a large part of the division; but the loss was terrible. In the half-hour that they were under fire, fourteen hundred men were lost. Of the four brigade commanders, Cross fell almost at the first fire and Zook a few minutes afterward. On the morning of that day General Hancock said to Colonel Cross: "This is the last time you will fight as a Colonel; to-day will make you a Brigadier-General." Cross answered, firmly and sadly, as though he felt sure of what he said: "No; it is too late, General; I will never wear the star. To-day I shall be killed."

The combat at this point, during the evening of July 2, was of a most sanguinary character, each side fighting with a dreadful earnestness. Four or five of our best divisions had charged over the same spot, and were met every time by the choice troops of the enemy — both determined to hold the ridge in front of the wheat-field. Until toward dark the fight had certainly gone against us, and the battle had extended along the line, to the right, almost half-way to the cemetery. The evening and our prospects grew dark together. The Third Corps had been driven back, broken and shattered, its commander wounded and carried from the field. The troops that had gone to its support fared no better, and every man felt that the situation was grave.

However, all was not yet lost. Meade had again thought of Hancock, and as the day before he sent him to stop the rout of the First and Eleventh Corps, so again he ordered him to assume command on the left. Once more he was in the fight. A half-hour of daylight yet remained, but it was long enough to enable him to rally some of our scattered troops, face them once more to the front, gather reinforcements, drive back the enemy, and restore our broken lines.

Few of our troops slept during this night. The Second Corps went back and was put in position on Cemetery Ridge by General Hancock, who all the night long labored to strengthen this line. The men gathered rocks and fence-rails, and used them to erect a light breastwork.

This closed the second day of the great battle; and Hancock, who had saved the army by his presence on the 1st of July, had saved the critical position on the 2d. On the fall of Sickles, he had assumed command of the Third Corps as well as the Second, placing the latter under the immediate orders of General Gibbon, and established his headquarters well up to the front, midway between Cemetery Ridge and Little Round Top.

CHAPTER XI.

Gettysburg.—The Third Day.—The Storm of Fire.—Hancock's Wonderful Deed of Valor.—His Ride from Left to Right of the Line and back again.—The Final Desperate Assault of the Confederates.—Hancock Beats Them Back.—Struck Down in the Moment of Victory.—But He Saved the Day.—Thanks of Congress.

At the first gray dawn of the morning of July 3, the fight was resumed on Culp's Hill, where the Confederates had effected a lodgment the night before; and as the day advanced, the artillery joined in, and the battle at that point became earnest. It was not until nine o'clock that the cessation of the firing and the cheers of General Geary's men gave notice all down the line that the enemy had been driven out, and that we were again in possession of that point.

Then came a perfect calm. All along Hancock's line, from Cemetery Hill to Round Top, not a shot had been fired that morning. The fate of battle had reserved Hancock to bear the terrible brunt of the final desperate assault on which was to depend the result of the battle, and to gloriously repulse it.

But the quiet was soon to be broken. About noon there could be seen from Hancock's line considerable activity among the Confederates along Seminary Ridge. Battery after battery appeared along the edge of the woods. Guns were unlimbered, placed in position and the horses taken to the rear. On our side officers sat

around in groups, and, through field-glasses, anxiously watched these movements in their front, and wondered what it all meant. Shortly after one o'clock, however, they knew all about it. The headquarters wagons had just come up, and General Gibbon had invited Hancock and staff to partake of some lunch. The bread that was handed around — if it ever was eaten — was consumed without butter; for as the orderly was passing the latter article to the gentlemen, a shell from Seminary Ridge cut him in two.

Instantly the air was filled with bursting shells; the batteries that had been for the last two hours getting into position did not open singly or spasmodically. The whole hundred and twenty guns, which now began to play upon our lines, seemed to be discharged simultaneously, as though by electricity. And then for nearly two hours the storm of death went on.

One who was present under this fire thus describes it: "No tongue or pen can find language strong enough to convey any idea of its awfulness. The air was full of missiles; streams of shot and shell screamed and hissed everywhere; it seemed as though nothing could live under that terrible fire. Men and horses were torn limb from limb; caissons exploded one after another in rapid succession, blowing the gunners to pieces. The infantry hugged the ground closely, and sought every slight shelter that the light earthworks afforded. It was literally a storm of shot and shell, like the fall of raindrops or the beat of hailstones. Those who had taken part in every battle of the war never had seen anything like that cannonade, and the oldest soldiers

began to be uneasy about the result. Hundreds and thousands were stricken down; the shrieks of animals and screams of wounded men were appalling; still the awful rushing sound of flying missiles went on, and apparently never would cease."

It was then, when the firmest hearts had begun to quail, the army witnessed one of the grandest sights ever beheld by any army on earth, — a deed of heroism such as we are apt to attribute only to the knights of the olden time. Suddenly the band began to play "The Star-Spangled Banner," and Hancock, mounted, and accompanied by his staff, Maj. W. G. Mitchell, Capt. Harry Bingham, Capt. Isaac Parker, and Capt. E. P. Bronson, with the corps flag flying in the hands of a brave Irishman, Private James Wells, of the Sixth New York Cavalry, started at the right of his line, where it joins the Taneytown road, and slowly rode along the terrible crest in front of the line, to the extreme left of his position, while shot and shell roared and crashed around him, and every moment tore great gaps in the ranks at his side.

The soldiers held their breath, expecting every moment to see him fall from his horse pierced by a dozen bullets. It was a gallant deed, and, withal, not a reckless exposure of life; for the presence and calm demeanor of the commander, as he passed through the lines of his men, set them an example which an hour later bore good fruit, and nerved their stout hearts to win the greatest and most decisive battle ever fought on this continent. Every soldier felt his heart thrill as he witnessed the magnificent courage of his General,

and he resolved to do something that day which would equal it in daring.

There could be no fitter subject for the heroic ballad than this incident, which has thus been told:—

"A hundred guns — yes, fifty more—
Rained down their shot and shell
As if, from out its yawning door,
Drove the red blast of hell.
The hiss! the crash! the shriek! the groan!
The ceaseless iron hail!
All this for half the day. I own
It made the stoutest quail

"But sudden, far to left, we heard
The band strike up: and lo!
Full in our front — no breath was stirred —
Came Hancock, riding slow.
As slow as if on dress-parade,
All down the line to right
And back again. By my good blade,
Was ever such a sight?

"We lay at length. No ranks could stand
Against that tempest wild;
Yet on he rode, with hat in hand,
And looked, and bowed, and smiled.
Whatever fears we had before
Were gone. That sight, you know,
Just made us fifty thousand more,
All hot to face the foe.

"You've heard the rest How on they came;
Earth shaking at their tread;
A cheer; our ranks burst into flame;
Steel crossed; the foe had fled.
Yet still that dauntless form I see,
Slow riding down the line.
Was ever deed of chivalry
So grand, oh, comrade mine?"

Just as Hancock reached the left of his line, the rebel batteries ceased to play, and their infantry, eighteen thousand strong, were seen emerging from the woods and advancing up the hill. Hancock knew the artillery fire had been intended to demoralize his men, and cover the advance of their infantry, which was to make the real attack. Turning his horse, he rode slowly up his line from left to right, holding his hat in his hand, bowing and smiling to the troops as they lay flat on the ground. Hardly had he reached the right of the line when the men, who, inspired by the courage of their General, could now hardly restrain themselves, received orders to attack the advancing rebels.

Eighty of his guns then opened their brazen mouths; solid shot and shell were sent on their errand of destruction in quick succession. They could be seen to fall in countless numbers among the advancing troops. The accuracy of the fire could not be excelled; the missiles struck right in the ranks, tearing and rending them in every direction. The ground over which they had passed was strewn with dead and wounded. But, on they came, with bayonets flashing, and standards gayly flapping in the wind, marching steadily across the interval. The distance was nearly a mile, too great to double-quick, and those lines of gray moved on in common time, but with a steadiness and precision seldom equalled. The gaps in their ranks were closed as soon as made.

General Mulholland, in describing this charge, pays this merited compliment to the bravery of the Southern troops: "Our gunners now load with canister, and the

effect is appalling; but still they march on. Their gallantry is past all praise; it is sublime. Now they are within a hundred yards. Our infantry rise up and pour round after round into these heroic troops. At Waterloo the Old Guard recoiled before a less severe fire. But there was no recoil in these men of the South; they marched right on as though they courted death."

At the objective point of the Confederate attack was but a single line of men, two ranks, with no reserves in sight; and as the men stood there in one feeble but undaunted line, each man felt that he must die in his tracks if necessary, as a break in the line would cause a defeat of the army.

As the enemy came nearer, they grew more excited; and inspired by their officers and the hopes of an easy victory, they started on the run, filling the air with their peculiar yells. But when they reached a point where musket-firing became effective, the veterans of the Peninsula, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville poured in upon them such a volley as to stagger them and throw them into confusion. This was followed by a rapid fire that caused them to fall back.

Pettigrew followed Pickett, and when his division came in range he received like treatment; but the enemy were so persistent that they actually obtained a foothold upon the Union line, and in some places hand-to-hand fights took place.

General Hancock was everywhere, exposed to danger and cheering the men by his presence. He detected the exposed position of the left flank of Petti-

grew's division, and caused a flank movement that resulted in the capture of many prisoners and several stand of colors. The terrible assault was beaten back, and the battle was won. A few of the Confederates here and there ran away and tried to regain their lines; but many laid down their arms and came in as prisoners. Of that attacking force, five thousand men surrendered to Hancock's troops, and thirty stand of colors were gathered up in front of the Second Corps.

It was then, in the supreme moment of triumphant battle, that Hancock fell, among his men, at the front, on the line of Stannard's Vermont brigade. He was seen to reel in his saddle, and was helped to the ground — but not to the rear.

"Shall we not carry you to the rear, General?" inquired Colonel Vesey, who was near him.

"No, I thank you, Colonel," said Hancock, waving his hand, even in pain, with the grace for which he is noted. "Attend to your commands, gentlemen; I will take care of myself."

So he remained and continued to direct the fight until victory was secured. Then he sent Major Mitchell to General Meade, with the following message: — "The troops under my command have repulsed the enemy's assault, and we have gained a great victory. The enemy is now flying in all directions in my front." The aid, in delivering this message, added the information, of which General Meade was then ignorant, that General Hancock was desperately wounded. General Meade sent back the following reply: "Say to General Hancock that I am sorry he is wounded, and

that I thank him, for the country and for myself, for the service he has rendered to-day." For such services no thanks and no reward could be adequate. Congress, by joint resolution, three years later, thanked General Hancock for his "gallant, meritorious, and conspicuous share in that great and decisive victory;" but the country will never forget how much it owed the salvation of the Union to his services on that field.

CHAPTER XII.

After Gettysburg. — General Meade's Report. — Hancock's Fight "Terminated the Battle." — His Opinion of the Battle and its Results. — Hancock's Wound. — The Surgeon's Story. — His Journey Home. — Invalid Soldiers carry him on their Shoulders to his Father's House. — At "Longwood" with his Family. — He Returns to Duty. — Recruiting the Second Corps. — Honors to Hancock in Northern Cities.

THE battle of Gettysburg decided the war for the Union; Hancock decided the battle of Gettysburg. General Meade, in his official report of this battle, says of the part taken by Hancock on this last decisive day:—

"An assault was made with great firmness, directed principally against the point occupied by the Second Corps, and was repelled with equal firmness by the troops of that corps, supported by Doubleday's division and Stannard's brigade of the First Corps. During this assault, both Major-General Hancock, commanding the left centre, and Brigadier-General Gibson, commanding the Second Corps, were severely wounded.

"This terminated the battle, the enemy retiring to his lines, leaving the field strewn with his dead and wounded, and numerous prisoners in our hands."

History has given General Hancock his due as the "directing mind" which, on the first day of the battle evolved order out of confusion among the broken and

flying troops of Meade's advance and placed the army in the position where it could fight and win the great battle of the war; as the prompt and sagacious commander who on the second day saved the key of the battle-field to the Union army; and as the valiant fighter who, by his personal bravery, inspired his troops to repel the culminating assault on the third and last day, and win the battle for the Republic. General Meade appreciatively said: "No commanding general ever had better lieutenant than Hancock. He was always faithful and reliable."

Twelve years later, General Hancock wrote thus generously of his comrades in the battle of Gettysburg: —

"As the terrible contest at Gettysburg contributed in its results probably more than any other battle of the war to the maintenance of the Union in its integrity, so, far above private interests or individual reputations, rises the great renown won on that field by the grand old Army of the Potomac.

"Cemetery Hill has since become consecrated ground. The place where General Howard was superseded in command on the first day of the fight is now covered with the graves of thousands of gallant soldiers whose bones lie buried at the base of the beautiful monumental column which commemorates their fame. Two of the marble statues ornamenting the pedestal personify War and History. War, symbolized by a soldier resting from the conflict, narrates to History the story of the struggle, and the deeds of the martyr-heroes who fell in that famous battle. In remembrance of those noble comrades who laid down their lives for the general weal, it were simply sacrilege for any survivor to pour into the ears of History an incorrect account of the contest;

still more to assume to himself honors belonging perhaps less to the living than to the dead.

"The historian of the future who essays to tell the tale of Gettysburg undertakes an onerous task, a high responsibility, a sacred trust. Above all things, justice and truth should dwell in his mind and heart. Then, dipping his pen as it were in the crimson tide, the sunshine of heaven lighting his page, giving 'honor to whom honor is due,' doing even justice to the splendid valor alike of friend and foe, he may tell the world how rain descended in streams of fire, and the floods came in billows of rebellion, and the winds blew in blasts of fraternal execration, and beat upon the fabric of the Federal Union, and that it fell not; for, resting upon the rights and liberties of the people, it was founded upon a rock."

The scene of the repulse of Longstreet's grand charge by Hancock was indescribable. In front of the line of the Second Corps the dead lay in great heaps. Dismounted guns, ruins of exploded caissons, dead and mutilated men and horses were piled up together in every direction. The colonel of one of Pickett's regiments lay dead, his arms clasping the body of his brother, who was major of his regiment. They were singularly handsome men, and greatly resembled each other. Out on the field where Longstreet's corps had passed, thousands of wounded were lying. There was no means of reaching these poor fellows, and many of them lay there between the lines until the morning of the 5th.

Many noble officers and men were lost on both sides, and in the camp hospital they died by hundreds during the afternoon and night. The rebel General Armistead died in this way. As he was being carried to the rear

he was met by Capt. Harry Bingham, of Hancock's staff, who, getting off his horse, asked him if he could do anything for him. Armistead requested him to take his watch and spurs to General Hancock, that they might be sent to his relatives. His wishes were complied with, General Hancock sending them to his friends the first opportunity. Armistead was a brave soldier, with a most chivalric presence, and came forward in front of his brigade, waving his sword. He was shot through the body and fell inside of our lines.

All the next day, July 4, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the army lay quiet, awaiting events. On the morning of the 5th the enemy had disappeared. Meantime Hancock had been taken to the hospital and his wound treated as well as possible. It was a terrible stroke. Dr. Alexander N. Dougherty was Medical Director of the Second Corps at that time, and he tells the story in this way : —

"When General Hancock succeeded General Couch as commander of the old Second Corps, I became his Medical Director. At the battle of Gettysburg he commanded the First, Second, and Third Corps, one-half of the army. In the third day's fight at Gettysburg he was wounded, and I was sent for. I found him lying on the hill-slope, under a tree, and facing the enemy. There was a deep, wide gash in his leg, near the groin. In the wound were wood splinters and a tenpenny nail. General Hancock was anxious to know what the rebels were using in their shells. He thought he had been wounded by splinters from one of the enemy's shells. We put him into an ambulance, and I lay down beside him. Then we drove through a hot fire to my hospital.

Afterward I discovered that a bullet had penetrated his saddle, and then lodged in his thigh, carrying with it the wood splinters and the tenpenny nail. As he lay in the hospital in great pain, I, at his dictation, wrote his first despatch to General Meade announcing the victory won at Gettysburg, adding to the despatch that the defeat would be turned into a rout. He was calm, patient, and heroic. He is equally entitled with Meade to the honor of the victory at Gettysburg, and Meade would say so if he were alive. On the night of the second day's battle a council of war was held. It was proposed to fall back and establish the line of battle at Pipe Creek, but Hancock opposed it. He argued that the army should stay where it was, and he said that the Army of the Potomac had made its last retreat, and should fight or die on the line where the battle was begun. General Meade finally coincided with Hancock, and the result was that that great victory crippled the rebels so that they never recovered from it."

General Hancock went home on sick leave, wounded nigh unto death. The ball which tore through his saddle and made that cruel wound in his thigh could not be found by the surgeons, and it was still in his body when he went back to Norristown.

He travelled as easily as possible, although every movement was torture to his shattered limb. A stretcher was laid over the backs of the seats of the railway car, and thus he rode into his native town. Arrived at the station in Norristown, he was met by a detachment of the Invalid Guards, who tenderly placed him on their shoulders, lying on the stretcher, and carried him through the streets to his father's house, his boyhood's home.

It was a deeply moving sight. The bright and fun-loving boy of seemingly a few years ago was brought home a wounded hero, borne on the shoulders of the men whom he had led in battle for their country. The doorways and windows were crowded as the little cortege passed, and people did not cheer, but spoke with voices hushed in sympathy.

General Hancock looked like a dying man when he was brought home to Norristown, and his parents and his old friends were oppressed with the gloomiest forebodings of the future.

As has been said, the ball was still in his body. The surgeons at the army hospital had probed for it while the General lay in a recumbent posture; but one day the family physician who attended him in Norristown had a bright idea and asked the General to place himself as nearly as he could in the position which he occupied on his horse when he was hit. The General straddled a chair and did so, and the doctor pushed the probe in easily and found the ball. It was lodged close upon the bone, which was more or less splintered.

The work of extracting the ball was then easy; and when this was done General Hancock's recovery, though slow, was steady.

Indeed, early in September, hardly more than two months after he received the wound on the bloody field of Gettysburg, General Hancock was able to leave Norristown and travel toward his western home, where he had left his wife and children.

He travelled by easy stages, for his wound was troublesome; but always his chief thought was how

he might return to the field and engage again in the work that still needed the hands of patriots. At New York we find him writing home for certain military documents to be forwarded to him. At West Point he stopped for consultation.

It was a tedious and painful journey, but it was lightened by the enthusiastic receptions which awaited the wounded hero at every tarrying place. Every one joined to do him honor; public attention welcomed him on every side. As soon as possible he reached his family at his home near St. Louis, which he had named "Longwood." He tells in a letter home how his recovery progressed: —

LONGWOOD, MO., Oct. 12, 1863.

MY DEAR FATHER: — I threw aside my crutches a few days after my arrival, and now walk with a cane. I am improving, but do not yet walk without a little "roll." My wound is still unhealed, though the doctors say it is closing rapidly. I find some uneasiness in sitting long in a chair, and cannot yet ride. The bone appears to be injured and may give me trouble for a long time. I hope, however, I may be well enough in two weeks to join my corps.

I am busy in trimming up the forest trees in the lawn of "Longwood," which covers nearly eleven acres. I know it is not the best time, but still it will do.

Alice and the children send their best love to you and mother. Please give my best love to mother, and I remain, as ever,

Your affectionate son,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

But General Hancock was compelled to hold his eager

soul in the leash of patience some time longer. His commission as Major in the regular army came Nov. 3, 1863, but still he was too feeble to return to duty. His spirit chafed under this restraint, and although the Army of the Potomac, with his own gallant Second Corps, was engaged during the summer and fall in what was termed a campaign of manœuvres, with no distinguishing battles, he longed to be with them.

It was not until December, 1863, that he was able to enter active service again. He was then ordered to Washington; and although his Gettysburg wound was not healed, he obeyed with alacrity, reporting to the War Department, Dec. 27.

The army then being in winter quarters, General Hancock was sent on recruiting duty. Although the Confederacy was on its last legs, it still had vitality, and its leaders were persistent in their struggle for Southern independence. So Hancock was given authority to increase his corps to fifty thousand effective men, and was sent north to stir up the patriotism of the people and induce enlistments. His headquarters were established at Harrisburg, and he immediately set to work in his native State, issuing the following address under date of Jan. 15, 1864: —

To the People of Pennsylvania:

I have come among you as a Pennsylvanian, for the purpose of endeavoring to aid you in stimulating enlistments. This is a matter of interest to all the citizens of the State. I earnestly call upon you all to assist, by the exertion of all the influence in your power, in this important matter.

To adequately reinforce our armies in the field is to insure

that the war will not reach your homes. It will be the means of bringing it to a speedy and happy conclusion. It will save the lives of many of our brave soldiers which would be otherwise lost by the prolongation of the war, and in indecisive battles.

It is only necessary to destroy the rebel armies now in the field, to insure a speedy and permanent peace. Let us all act with that fact in view.

Let it not be said that Pennsylvania, which has already given so many of her sons to this righteous cause, shall now, at the eleventh hour, be behind her sister States in furnishing her quota of the men deemed necessary to end this rebellion. Let it not be that those Pennsylvania regiments, now so depleted, that have won for themselves so much honor in the field, shall pass out of existence for want of patriotism in the people.

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,
Major-General U. S. Volunteers.

Hancock was pre-eminently the man for the work to which he was set. Bravest among the brave, loyal to the core, wearing already the wreath of victor won in the hardest battle, a stanch Democrat, a soldier who carried a yet unhealed wound on his person, and, beyond all, possessed of that magnetic power which leads men captive, he had a success which few others could have achieved in recruiting the waning strength of the Union Army.

Philadelphia tendered him a public reception, placing the historic Independence Hall at his service in a special vote of thanks and welcome by the Select and Common Councils of the city government. The city of New York placed the governor's room, in the City Hall, at

his disposal for the same purpose, and received him with great distinction. At Albany, the Legislature paid him an official tribute of respect for his distinguished services to the country. In Boston, the Legislature, which was then in session, invited him upon the floor of the House, and a public reception was given him by the merchants and citizens at the Merchants' Exchange. The people then, as now, looked up to him as one of their heroes, in whose wisdom and energy, no less than in his valor, they trusted the future of the Republic. No wonder that, in later years, when the news of his nomination to the Presidency was flashed over the wires throughout the land, the people rose in glad recognition of the leader whom they had welcomed on his patriotic errand during those dark days in the winter of 1863.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Wilderness.—Grant takes Command of all the Armies.—The Army of the Potomac crosses the Rapidan.—Hancock Leads the Advance.—The Two Days' Fight in the Wilderness.—The Story of One of the gallant Second Corps.—Hancock leads the Charge against Longstreet's Men over the Breastworks.

It was March of the year 1864 when Hancock was again called to take command of the corps which he had so valiantly and effectively led, and which he had so efficiently recruited. On the 2d of that month, Grant had been confirmed in the grade of Lieutenant-General, and on the 10th he had been assigned, by a special order of President Lincoln, to the command of "all the armies of the United States." The Army of the Potomac had been recruited up to a high standard, largely through the efforts of General Hancock, and the Union and Confederate forces lay facing each other along the Rapidan.

On the 18th of March General Hancock, still actively engaged in recruiting his corps at Harrisburg, Penn., wrote to his father: "I have just received an order from the Secretary of War to report without delay to him for instructions prior to rejoining my command in the field. I have but time to notify you of the fact." With this modest announcement Hancock set out on the campaign that was to end the war of Rebellion.

The Second Corps, Hancock's old command, was still

CROSSING THE RAPIDAN.

further augmented by the addition of the gallant Third Corps, making in all upwards of fifty thousand men, beside which the General had under his command part of the Fifth, Sixth, and Ninth Corps,—an army of veterans, tried by fire. Grant had in the Army of the Potomac, as reorganized, a movable column of about one hundred and forty thousand men; while against him was Lee, holding Richmond, with an army whose rolls at this time showed only fifty-two thousand six hundred and twenty-six men of all arms. The hour had come in which the Rebellion could be crushed.

On the 3d of May the order went forth that the Army of the Potomac should launch forth on its great adventure. Lee's army occupied the bluffs that skirt the south bank of the Rapidan for many miles. It was a position impregnable to direct assault, and Grant's plan was to cross the river by the lower fords and turn the right of the Confederate army.

Hancock's corps left Culpepper Court-House on the night of the 3d of May, leading the advance in the post of honor which was eminently his due. They crossed Ely's Ford on the morning of the 4th, advancing to Chancellorsville, and bivouacking that night on the old battle-ground, where, one year before, they had fought a losing fight, though a brave one, under Hooker.

On the following day, May 5, the long fight began, which has gone into history with the name of the Battle of the Wilderness. Hancock who took the advance of the left column, pushed on far ahead, and was able to secure and hold a strategic point on the Orange plank road, which the Confederate General Hill endeavored

to capture. About four o'clock in the afternoon, the attack was made in the midst of the dense growth which gave that country its name of the "Wilderness." The fight at once grew very fierce, the opposing forces being very close together, and the musketry continuous and deadly along the whole line. In his report of this battle, Lee makes mention of "Hancock's repeated and desperate assaults." In his own report, Hancock speaks of the close and deadly character of the combat, and has a special word to say of the Irish brigade, under Colonels Smythe and Brooks, which "attacked the enemy vigorously on his right, and drove his line some distance." "The Irish brigade," says Hancock, further, "was heavily engaged, and although four-fifths of its numbers were recruits, it behaved with great steadiness and gallantry, losing largely in killed and wounded."

Hancock continued his efforts to drive Hill until eight o'clock, when night shut down on the darkening woods and ended the struggle. The combatants lay on their arms, exhausted after the fierce struggle, and many corpses in the tangled brakes and bushes told of the bloody work done that day.

Thus was the battle of the Wilderness opened. It was fought in a country whose natural features were peculiarly disadvantageous for the movements of an army. The whole face of the country was thickly wooded, with only an occasional opening, and intersected by a few narrow wood-roads. But the woods of the Wilderness did not have the ordinary features of a forest. The region is one of mineral rocks, and for more than a hundred years extensive iron mining had

been carried on there. To feed the mines, the timber of the country for many miles around had been cut down, and in its place there had arisen a dense undergrowth of low-limbed and scraggy pines, stiff and bristling chincapins, scrub-oaks and hazel. Swinton, in describing the theatre of what he justly calls this singular and terrible combat, says, : "It is a region of gloom and the shadow of death. Manœuvring here was necessarily out of the question, and only Indian tactics told. The troops could only receive direction by a point of the compass; for not only were the lines of battle entirely hidden from the sight of the commander, but no officer could see ten files on each side of him. Artillery was wholly ruled out of use; the massive concentration of three hundred guns stood silent, and only an occasional piece or section could be brought into play in the roadsides. Cavalry was still more useless. But in that horrid thicket there lurked two hundred thousand men, and through it lurid fires played; and, though no array of battle could be seen, there came out of its depths the crackle and roll of musketry, like the noisy boiling of some hell-cauldron that told the dread story of death."

Hancock was also to bear the brunt of the battle on the following day. Both armies were awake early to assume the offensive. And when, at five o'clock, Hancock opened the attack on the enemy in his front, he overpowered the Confederates, and, after an hour's severe contest, the whole hostile front was carried, and the enemy driven a mile and a half through the woods, under heavy loss, back on the Confederates' headquar-

ters. Longstreet's arrival alone saved Lee's army from utter and complete defeat at that time. Indeed, the tables were nearly turned; for a fire in the woods, creeping up towards the breastwork of logs, behind which one of Hancock's division was placed, set the works ablaze, and drove the smoke and flame back upon the men with such fury, that they were unable to fire over the parapet, and the enemy, pressing forward, planted their standard on the breastworks. Then it was that Hancock in person led the assault of his gallant corps and drove out the invaders with a rush.

One of those who fought under Hancock in the Wilderness, describes this battle :—

"The fighting of the battle of the Wilderness commenced, as you remember, on May 5, 1864. Our combined troops, known as the Second Corps, were given a central position, with a plank road to protect. The Fifth Corps was on our right, and the Sixth on the left. For three days, until the 8th, our positions remained unchanged. On that day there was little fighting in front of us, and there was no evidence that we would be disturbed. But General Hancock's foresight on this occasion, as on many others, did not assert itself in vain. All day long, under his orders, we were busy in intrenching ourselves. During the day General Sedgwick, of the Fifth Corps, came riding along with his staff and saw us at work.

"'What in the hell are you doing there?' he said, in his brusque way.

"'I am expecting an assault,' replied Hancock.

"'But there will be none,' Sedgwick answered; 'the fighting will be over there on the right.'

"'That may be,' replied Hancock, quietly, 'but I'm going to be ready.'

"'What can you do with a single corps?' persisted Sedgwick; 'if the rebels come here they will bring their whole army.'

"'Well,' said General Hancock, 'let them come. I am going to hold this road.'

"It seemed to me that the whole rebel army did come. About four o'clock that very day, Hill's and Longstreet's corps were massed against us and fought for three hours. We were almost driven out of our position. Many of our troops had already turned to run, and defeat seemed imminent. But we finally rallied, and stopped the advancing enemy. A few moments more and the gray coats were in turn retreating.

"Over our works went Hancock, leading the pursuit, and we following him closely. We drove them about a mile and a half back, into the very centre of their position. That was the close of the battle of the Wilderness. That night the Confederate army retreated to Spottsylvania.

"Hancock on that day was here, there, and everywhere, directing our movements. I don't know how he ever came to expect that attack; but he was ready. I suppose it was his wonderful foresight. All day long he hurried us, and was continually warning us that the earthworks would not be completed in time to protect us."

This practically ended the battle of the Wilderness. Hancock, as usual, had occupied the post of danger and of honor; he had driven the enemy before him, had suffered severely, and had wrested success out of the jaws of defeat by one of those superb exhibitions of personal valor which add such brilliancy to his grand military genius.

When the third day, May 7, dawned, neither army cared to take the initiative, and a cavalry combat at

Todd's Farm was the only incident. Tens of thousands of dead and wounded, in blue and in gray, lay in the thick woods. The Union loss exceeded fifteen thousand; the Confederates lost about eight thousand. Such was the cruel ending of this strange and horrible battle, which no man could see, whose progress could be followed only by the ear as the sharp and crackling volleys of musketry, and the alternate Union cheer and Confederate yell, told how the fight surged and swelled.

But Hancock still held his advanced position. Lee had lost Longstreet, dangerously wounded by the fire of his own men, and Grant determined to go on toward Richmond. Hancock pushed forward his advance on Sunday, May 8, and the entire line followed.

CHAPTER XIV.

Spottsylvania. — Hancock fights the Battle of the Po. — General Sedgwick's Death. — The Bloodiest Battle of the War. — Hancock Takes and Holds the Famous "Salient Angle." — "A Morning Call" on General Johnson. — Hancock's Retort. — Accounts of the Spottsylvania Fight by Eye-witnesses.

GRANT'S purpose was to move southward from the Wilderness and plant himself between Lee's army and Richmond by a movement upon Spottsylvania Court-House, fifteen miles distant. But Lee was too quick for him, and on Monday, May 9, the Confederates had taken possession of Spottsylvania Court-House, planted their army across Grant's line of march, and drawn up on Spottsylvania Ridge a bulwark of defence where, for twelve days, they were able to hold in check the Army of the Potomac.

This army was all brought into position on the 9th, and although no engagement occurred, the enemy's sharp-shooters brought down an illustrious victim in the person of General Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth Corps, who was shot while standing on the breastworks along his line, and almost instantly expired.

These sharpshooters were perched in the forest-trees above the heads and out of sight of the Union skirmishers, and played havoc along our line. One who stood by General Sedgwick when he fell, describes the scene :—

"A little hum of leaden bees about the advanced line of breastworks caused the soldiers to dodge and duck their heads. The General smiled at them good-naturedly; he had a winning smile. Finally one bee hummed so near a poor Irishman's auricle that he dropped down upon his face. General Sedgwick touched him with his foot in humorous disdain: 'Pooh, pooh, man! Who ever heard of a soldier dodging a bullet! Why, they couldn't hit an elephant at this distance!' There was a laugh at this, even though the straggling bees yet hummed unpleasantly around. The General was still smiling over the banter, when Colonel McMahon heard the buzz of a bullet culminate in what seemed an explosion close beside him. 'That must have been an explosive bullet, General.' No answer. But as the face of General Sedgwick slightly turned toward the beloved officer at his side, a curious, sad, not despairing, but almost contented smile was upon it. Another moment, and the form of the General fell helplessly backward. It was caught by Colonel McMahon as it fell. A ball had entered the face just below the left eye, pierced the brain, and passed out at the back of the head. He never spoke afterward, though he breathed softly for awhile."

During the afternoon Hancock was directed to make a movement across the River Po for the purpose of capturing a Confederate wagon-train; where, on the following day, having been recalled to assist in an attack on another position, Hancock repulsed a desperate assault of the enemy. During the heat of the contest, the woods in the rear of the troops, between them and the river, took fire; and in the midst of these appalling perils, with a fierce foe in front and a blazing forest behind, Hancock not only repelled the enemy,

but conducted his command across the river. Here he lost the first gun that the Second Corps had ever abandoned on the field. It was left behind in consequence of being sunk in a marsh.

Hot work awaited Hancock on his return. The hill which he was to assault, in conjunction with Warren's corps, was, as he states in his report, the most formidable point along the enemy's whole front. Its densely wooded crest was crowned with earthworks, while the approach, which was swept by artillery and musketry fire, was rendered more difficult and hazardous by a heavy growth of cedars,—mostly dead,—the long, bayonet-like branches of which, interlaced and pointing in all directions, presented an almost impassable barrier to the advance of a line of battle. Hancock led the assault at five o'clock in the afternoon; and although he returned again and again to the attack, and the men even entered the enemy's breastworks at one or two points, the task was an impossible one.

Finding that he could not succeed against Lee's left, Grant resolved to make a sudden sally against his right centre, and Hancock's corps was again chosen to lead the way, the rest of the army in support.

On the night of May 11, Hancock moved his men into position; and at half-past four o'clock the next morning, as soon as the faint dawn permitted the direction of advance to be seen through thick fog which prevailed, he moved forward. He advanced by the compass, no landmarks being visible in the fog and the thicket, and without firing a shot captured the Confederate pickets. Then, taking the double-quick, the

troops, with a ringing cheer, rolled like a resistless wave into the enemy's works, tearing away with their hands what abatis there was in front of the intrenchments, and carried the line at all points. Inside the intrenchments there ensued a savage hand-to-hand combat with the bayonet and clubbed muskets.

The fight was of short duration, resulting in the capture of General Johnson and nearly the whole of his division, four thousand men, twenty pieces of artillery, and thirty colors. The rest of the force fled to the rear in great confusion.

The point where Hancock struck the enemy's line of works was where it formed what is called a salient; and, having burst open this angle, Hancock had driven a wedge between the right and centre of the enemy, and was in a position to rive asunder the Confederate army. Lee made no less than five desperate assaults to regain this position; but Hancock was ably supported, and the enemy was successfully repulsed.

Speaking of this affair, Swinton says that "of all the struggles of the war, this was perhaps the fiercest and most deadly. Frequently throughout the conflict, so close was the contest that the rival standards were planted on opposite sides of the breastworks. The enemy's most savage sallies were directed to retake the famous salient which was now become an angle of death, and presented a spectacle ghastly and terrible. On the Confederate side of the works lay many corpses of those who had been bayoneted by Hancock's men when they first leaped the intrenchments. To these were constantly added the bravest of those who, in the

assaults to recapture the position, fell at the margin of the works, till the ground was literally covered with piles of dead, and the woods in front of the salient were one hideous Golgotha." It is further stated that the musketry fire was so terrible as to kill the whole forest within its range, trees even eighteen inches in diameter being cut clean in two by the bullets.

At midnight, after twenty hours of combat, Lee withdrew his bleeding lines. And, although the loss on the Union side was terrible, Hancock's victory had a moral effect upon the army which was worth all it cost.

The story of his fight, as told by one of the officers serving under Hancock, gives some entertaining incidents as observed by an actor in and an eye-witness of the battle:—

"We were on the extreme right on the Po River. We fought there on the 10th and 11th without changing our positions. The Confederates were intrenched on some of the hills that ran around in the form of a crescent. We were on the outside of this crescent, and they on the inside. We got rather the worst of it during the two days' fighting.

"On the evening of the 11th, about six o'clock, Hancock sent word to each of his division commanders, that he had orders to go to the extreme left. I was informed at the time, and on good authority, that Hancock went directly to Grant, and received permission to make the move. That was the understanding then and afterwards, anyway, in our corps. We did not know how this manœuvre would result, but we were willing to trust any stratagem of our commander. So all night long we marched quietly around the entire army. Our line then extended about eight miles.

"We reached the extreme point on the left, indicated by

Hancock, about four A. M., on the 12th. It was just in the gray of the morning. We were then entirely cut off from the balance of our army, and were on the right of the enemy. General Hancock massed his corps into three lines, and started the charge at a quarter past four.

"Up the side of the hill we went, hurriedly and quietly. About half a mile from the intrenched lines of the enemy we encountered their pickets. Every man was captured without firing a gun. Advancing, we took their first line without a sound. The second line made some resistance; but we captured them with but little difficulty, and charged their third and last line with equal success. It was a complete surprise to the enemy. We were only thirty minutes from the time we started, until we reached the very heart of the enemy's camp. It was one of the most brilliant and successful moves of the war.

"I was the witness of a little incident on that occasion, which might be interesting. When we had captured the third line, General Hancock, who, as usual, was leading us, rode up to the headquarters of General Johnson, who was commanding the division of the enemy we had assaulted. I forget his first name, but I remember that he and Hancock were classmates at West Point. An orderly stood outside the tent. I was standing near by at the time and saw Hancock when he rode up.

"'Is General Johnson in?' he asked of the orderly, who replied in the affirmative.

"'Ask him to step out,' said Hancock; and presently Johnson appeared, buttoning up his clothes, for he was not yet dressed.

"'I have come to make you a morning call,' remarked our general, pleasantly, at the same time extending his hand. But Johnson was furious.

"'I cannot take your hand on such an occasion as this,' he exclaimed, angrily.

"'Oh, well,' answered General Hancock, 'you can do just as you please; only I thought I would like to make just as pleasant a job of this as possible. Under other circumstances I would not have offered you my hand.'

"In this retort the character of the man revealed itself in strong colors. He respected misfortune in any man, but could not be friendly to a rebel in arms.

"Then the defeated general was turned over to some staff officer and carried to the rear.

"Having gained this position, we had to keep it. Fearing an attack, we immediately commenced to intrench ourselves. About two hours afterwards, the enemy's troops came upon us in a solid mass, under cover of their artillery. Hancock was going everywhere, talking to our troops.

"'Boys,' said he, 'we have captured this position and we must hold it. If we let them have this place they will serve us worse than we did them. It will be death for every man of you.'

"We stayed there. All day long they kept firing upon us, but by nine o'clock that night the guns died down. Next morning the Confederates had departed and were on their way to Cold Harbor. This occasion was known as Hancock's great charge at Spottsylvania."

A war correspondent describes the terrible conflict over the salient angle in the enemy's works which Hancock had taken and was holding: —

"A battle raged over those intrenchments, the intense fury and heroism and horror of which it is simply impossible to describe at all. Five distinct, savage, tremendous charges were made by the enemy to retake that position. The lines of both armies met in a continual death-grapple in and to the right of the angle of death taken in the morning. To have

looked down on that battle from a height would have been like gazing into the smoke and din of an earthquake. Column after column of the enemy penetrated to the very face of the breastwork, to be hewn down and sent back like a broken wave. Column after column still came on, dealing death and meeting it, and making way for other columns, and others still; and all the day long, against this rush of a foe that seemed disdainful of life, the angle was held by our troops, fighting, falling, but unyielding, to the close. When the night came, the angle of those works, where the battle had been the hottest, and from which the enemy had been finally driven, had a spectacle, for whoever cared to look, that would never have enticed his gaze again. Men in hundreds, killed and wounded together, were piled in hideous heaps, some bodies that had lain for hours under the concentric fire of the battle being perforated with wounds. The writhing of wounded beneath the dead moved these masses at times; at times a lifted arm or a quivering limb told of an agony not yet quenched by the Lethe of death around."

The cruel sharpness of war had never a more vivid illustration than in these battles of the Wilderness; nor was the patriotic heroism of commanders and of men ever more grandly shown than in these contests where none of the pomp of battle accompanied the struggle, but only its horrors were to be found.

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CHAPTER XV.

Cold Harbor.—The March from Spottsylvania toward Richmond.—A Race between Two Armies.—Hancock finds Lee before him at the North Anna.—He Carries the Bridge.—Hancock at Cold Harbor.—He Carries the Enemy's Lines.—A Fight at Close Quarters.—Amenities of the Combat.

THE advance from Spottsylvania was not made until the 20th of May, and in the meantime Hancock was engaged in the desperate but not altogether successful attempts of Grant to force his way straight across the Confederate fortifications from the position he had captured on the 12th.

In the meantime, Sheridan, in whose command the dashing Custer was a subordinate, was making his wonderfully brilliant cavalry movements in the Shenandoah Valley and onward towards Richmond. This episode forms one of the most spirited chapters in the history of our war; and the meeting of the two great cavalry leaders in the Shenandoah Valley, Sheridan with the Union troopers and Stuart with the Confederate riders, makes one of its most romantic pages.

When at length Hancock was ordered forward, on the 20th of May, the movement was in fact a race between the two opposing armies for a new vantage-ground on the road to Richmond. This ground was on the North Anna River.

The country through which Hancock led his corps on

this hasty march was a wonderful and striking contrast to that whose horrors they left behind them. It was fair and fertile, beautifully undulating, with many large and fine plantations in the river-bottoms. The blight of war had not yet touched it; but here were fields with sprouting wheat and growing corn and luxuriant clover, homesteads with great ancestral elms and bountiful farms.

But when, on the 23d, Hancock came in sight of the North Anna, he saw on the opposite bank "the enemy in large force marching in column, evidently *en route* from Spottsylvania." Hancock had to force a passage of the river, and that, too, over a *tête du pont* which the Confederates had constructed and manned at the Chesterfield Bridge. Hancock made the assault, with Pierce and Egan's brigades, about an hour before sundown, under a heavy fire, the troops sweeping across the open plain at double-quick, making a foothold in the parapet with their bayonets, clambering over it, driving out the enemy, and capturing the bridge.

On the further advance, Hancock led another brilliant skirmish at the Tolopotomy; and when Grant determined to force the passage of the Chickahominy at Cold Harbor, Hancock was given the place on the left of the line as the order of battle was formed.

The assault upon the enemy's works was ordered to be by a general advance all along the line at half-past four in the morning of June 3. It was short, sharp, and bloody work. Before five o'clock the battle was decided. It was impossible to dislodge the enemy. Hancock's corps advanced for half a mile through woods

and over open intervals, under a severe fire, straight up to the enemy's works, and repeated the brilliant exploit of the "salient angle" at Spottsylvania. They climbed over the enemy's parapet, captured his guns, and carried off five or six hundred prisoners, with their colors. But it was useless. The works could not be carried as a whole, although Hancock's men fortified themselves in an advanced position.

One of the most remarkable incidents of the war occurred here. It was the retention of a position, all day, within fifteen yards of the enemy's works. The heroic band which performed this exploit was the brigade of Colonel McKean, in Hancock's corps, numbering about eight hundred men. Through the livelong day those men held their line within fifteen yards of the enemy, and all his force could not dislodge them.

The way it happened was that, through a fault of engineering, the rebel intrenchments were drawn on the rearward slope of the crest in front of Hancock, and thus thrown so far back that his men, when repulsed, were partially under cover as soon as they had passed the ridge, and their sharpshooters were able to keep the enemy's heads down long enough to allow hastily improvised parapets to be thrown up.

Repeatedly during the day the enemy formed double columns of attack, to come over the works and assail them; and the officers could be heard encouraging their troops by telling them "there are only four or five hundred of them — come on!" But the moment the rebels showed themselves above the parapet, a line of fire flashed out from behind the earthen mound where

eight hundred heroes stood in a new Thermopylæ, and many a Confederate threw up his arms and fell prone under their swift avenging bullets.

The sequel is as curious as the deed itself; for while the enemy dared not venture out to assail McKean's men, neither could he get back from his perilous position. In this dilemma, the ingenious device was hit upon of running a zigzag trench up from the Union lines to his. In this manner a working party was able to dig its way up to where they lay, begrimed with powder and worn out with fatigue, and at last they were brought safely away — all that were left of them. The gallant McKean was shot down while standing up to receive a rebel assault.

So close were the lines of the contending armies after this battle, that often not more than fifty yards separated them. A man would call out from behind the Union breastworks the signal of attack — "Forward! Guide centre!" — and the Confederates, hearing all that was said, would start up behind their parapet, while our men, just peering above their pits, would "draw a bead" on their tricked opponents and bring many a one down with a bloody gift.

Or, on the other side, one would call a parley and cry out:

"Yanks, ain't it about your time to cook coffee?"

"Yes," the Yanks would reply.

"Then," the response would come from the other side, "if you won't shoot while I make my johnny-cake, I won't shoot while you make your coffee."

This culinary truce was always observed with the strictest fidelity.

General Hancock, in his report of this battle, uses the significant language: "The troops advanced as far as the example of their officers could carry them." The position could not be carried, and officers and men realized it. An attempt was made to reduce the works by siege; but this was given up in a few days, and Grant determined to transfer his army to the south of the James River.

CHAPTER XVI.

Petersburg.— Hancock Celebrates Bunker-hill Day.— He Leads Successful Movements about Petersburg. — His Old Wound Reopens. — On Sick Leave Again but Quickly Returns.— The Explosion of the Petersburg Mine and its Disastrous Results.

On the 15th of May, as Hancock was marching under orders to "take up a position where the City Point Railroad crosses Harrison's Creek,"—a position which did not exist, except upon an incorrect and worthless map from which the orders were drawn,—he received a despatch from General Grant directing him to use all haste in going to the assistance of General Smith, who had attacked Petersburg. This was the first intimation that Hancock had received that Petersburg was to be attacked that day, or that General Smith was operating against the place. He hastened forward, but was unable to join Smith until after the attack had been made. General Hancock writes in his report: "The messages from Lieutenant-General Grant and from General Smith, which I received between five and six P. M., on the 15th, were the first and only intimation I had that Petersburg was to be attacked that day. Up to that hour I had not been notified from any source that I was expected to assist General Smith in assaulting that city."

General Meade endorsed, in a report now on file in the Army Department: "Had General Hancock or myself

known that Petersburg was to be attacked, Petersburg would have fallen." But Grant was compelled to sit down before that city in formal siege for nearly a year before it yielded.

General Hancock, to whom, in the absence of Grant and Meade, the command of the field fell, was restrained from attacking, by orders from Meade, until the remaining corps of the Army of the Potomac should arrive; and this happening on the 16th, he made the assault that day, driving the enemy some distance along the whole line. The attack was renewed by Hancock and Burnside on the 17th, the former succeeding in taking some important ground.

The movement of Hancock was designed to carry the four lines of works of the enemy outside the city, drive the Confederates into Petersburg, and, if possible, capture the town. On this, "Bunker-hill Day," writes one of the old Sixth Corps, which was then part of Hancock's command, "General Hancock formed his troops, in a piece of wood, between two forts, in such a way, and at such a point, that the enemy had no idea of what he was doing. Just as night was falling he led us out on the charge. Instead of charging either of the two forts, he led us on a dead run right between them. When on the other side he deployed his troops, and effected the capture of both. The enemy was so surprised that we met with little resistance. Then we made a gallant charge on the second line, and after a sharp fight secured it. Then the third line was stormed, and though the battle was now severe, we were successful. At the fourth line, however, we were

repulsed. Then the point was to maintain the position we had gained. It was now late at night, and the hostilities closed. The next morning, however, they opened upon us from all directions. As at Spottsylvania, Hancock told us that our position must be held or it was certain death for all of us. We did hold it; but it was hard work."

But this arduous labor for his country was performed at great cost. It will be remembered that Hancock was yet a wounded man, and under the surgeon's care when he took the field with Grant in the new Army of the Potomac. The hardships of the campaign had the effect of reopening the wound received at Gettysburg, and, on the evening of the 17th of June, his iron constitution broke down and he was compelled, with the greatest reluctance, to turn over the command of his corps, though he did not leave the field.

During the greater part of the campaign, indeed, he had suffered the most intense pain, being compelled to occupy an ambulance during the march, and only mounting his horse when his troops came in contact with the enemy, and his personal presence was needed to direct and inspire them.

The wound was in the upper part of the thigh. It had fractured and splintered the upper part of the femur, and at one time it was thought that his life could not be saved. A splendid constitution, however, and the best surgical skill, had brought him through the worst, and his entire recovery would have followed had not his impatience to be with his command in the field prevailed over his judgment. The penalty for this he

now had to pay by a brief retirement from the command of his corps.

On the 27th of June, however, he again took command, and participated in the operations before Petersburg until July 26, when he crossed to the north side of the James River, with his corps and a division of cavalry, and assaulted the enemy's lines at Deep Bottom, capturing the outer works, two hundred prisoners, several stands of colors, and four pieces of artillery.

It was while Hancock was engaged in these operations that General Burnside conceived and put in execution the idea of capturing the defences of Petersburg by assault after the demoralization consequent upon the explosion of a mine, through the breach formed by which an assaulting column could push forward and sweep the enemy right and left. The hour for the explosion was fixed at half-past four on the morning of July 30; and, as if to give chances to fate, Burnside decided the choice of the assaulting division by casting lots, or, as Grant expressed it, by "pulling straws or tossing coppers."

Hancock had just returned from his fortunate expedition to Deep Bottom, and was not concerned in the affair in any way. The match was applied to the mine at the hour appointed; but, owing to a defect in the fuse, the mine failed to explode. A second attempt succeeded, at about fifteen minutes before five o'clock in the morning. The effect produced is described as showing a solid mass of earth, through which the exploding powder blazed like lightning playing in a

bank of clouds, slowly rising some two hundred feet in the air, and hanging visibly a few seconds. Then it subsided, and a heavy cloud of black smoke floated off.

The explosion of the mine was the signal for a simultaneous outburst of artillery from the various batteries, and Leslie's division of Burnside's corps advanced to the charge.

On reaching the site of the fort, it was found to have been converted by the explosion into a huge crater one hundred and fifty feet long, sixty feet wide, and from twenty-five to thirty feet deep. Here the assaulting column sought shelter, though there was nothing to prevent its rushing forward and occupying the crest beyond, for the enemy was paralyzed by the explosion and remained inactive for some time. But the troops huddled together in the crater; and, as Meade said in his report, a scene of disorder and confusion commenced which continued to the end. The enemy rallied, brought their guns to bear, and poured shells and bombs into the hollow of the exploded earthworks where the Union troops were clustered. The crater became a slaughter-pen. Burnside sent out the colored division, and the brave black fellows pushed far ahead and captured prisoners and a stand of colors, but were beaten back into the fatal crater. Disaster followed.

General Hancock was a member of the military court of inquiry instituted soon after this failure, and the court found its causes to be: first, the injudicious formation of the troops in going forward; second, the halting of the troops in the crater, instead of going

forward to the crest, when there was no fire of any consequence from the enemy; third, no proper employment of engineer officers and working parties, and of materials and tools for their use, in the Ninth Corps; fourth, that some parts of the assaulting columns were not properly led; fifth, the want of a competent common head at the scene of the assault, to direct affairs as occurrences should demand.

But, while the causes of the mine fiasco before Petersburg may be differently judged by experts, the ordinary non-professional mind will always incline to the belief that it failed because a soldier of Hancock's magnetic presence, quick perception, and instant action was not the director and the leader of the assault.

CHAPTER XVII.

About Petersburg. — Hancock Commands at Deep Bottom. — Promotion to be Brigadier-General in the Regular Army. — His Horse shot under him at Reams' Station. — Battle of the Boydton Plank Road. — Recruiting a Veteran Corps. — Brevet Major-General for Gallantry at Spottsylvania. — In Command of the Middle Military Division when Lee Surrenders and the Confederacy collapses.

On the 12th of August, 1864, Hancock was promoted another long step in the regular army, his commission as Brigadier-General being issued to him on that date. The same day he was ordered to take command of the first of the several expeditions which Grant made against the enemy from his position before Petersburg. On this expedition General Hancock's force consisted of his own Second Corps, the Tenth Corps, and General Gregg's division of Cavalry. The movement was made against the enemy at Deep Bottom, where the Confederates were met in largely superior force, and General Hancock returned with several hundred prisoners and several stands of colors. Hancock returned to his camp before Petersburg on the 21st, after a very fatiguing march, and was immediately ordered to undertake the work of tearing up the railroad track to Reams' Station. This occupied the time until the 25th, when the enemy approached in strong force to prevent further destruction of the line.

Hancock met the assault with firmness and with per-

sistent bravery, although against tremendous odds. In spite of the fact that the support for which he telegraphed did not reach him, he held the ground valiantly through the day, being, as usual, on horseback among his troops, cheering and inspiring them, and again narrowly escaped death, having his horse shot under him. Both armies had enough of it during the day, and simultaneously withdrew after dark.

After the loss of the Weldon Railroad Lee's dependence was largely upon the Boydton plank road, from which Hancock was instructed to drive the Confederates. The expedition was only partially successful, the support not being what it should have been; but the brilliancy of Hancock's repulse of the great assault of the enemy, and the skill with which he handled the force under his command, elicited expressions of admiration even from Grant himself.

The battle of Boydton plank road was the last that General Hancock fought with his gallant Second Corps. He had been a sick man during all this campaign. When not on active fighting duty, he was in the hands of the surgeons; and even when on the march and in the battle, his wound had to be dressed daily, and almost as frequently pieces of the splintered bone were removed by the surgeons. It was his indomitable spirit that kept him up.

But, great as was the value of his services in the field, his country had yet greater need of him in another department of patriotic duty.

There were then many veteran soldiers in the country, whose terms of service had expired, and the govern-

ment considered the best means of calling into the field this desirable element. Veteran soldiers, having been once honorably discharged, hesitated to re-enter the service in regiments recruited since their own enlistments; so it was thought advisable to raise a corps which should consist of veterans alone. The man to whom the President first looked was, in regard both to the length and severity of his service, the chief of all the veteran general officers of the army; and that man was General Hancock.

So Hancock was ordered, on the 26th of November, 1864, to report at Washington and undertake the organization of this veteran corps. It was determined to make this corps fifty thousand strong; and it was very justly believed that, with Hancock at the head of this organization, the old soldiers would at once flock to the standard, and the force be recruited in the shortest possible time. This idea proved a correct one.

But this corps of veterans was destined never to be called into action. Events were marching fast, and Hancock's sword could not be spared from the field in the last terrible struggle for the extinction of the Confederate army. So he was again ordered to the front, in command of the Middle Military Division, Feb. 27, 1865, and made his headquarters at Winchester, the division embracing the departments of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Washington, and the force under his command including the Army of the Shenandoah, amounting to nearly one hundred thousand men of all arms.

With this force it was expected a decisive blow,

in one direction or the other, would be struck, and General Hancock was under orders to be ready to move at a few hours' notice, either on Lynchburg, to co-operate with the Army of the Potomac, or to take transports for the southern coast to co-operate with General Sherman, as the exigencies of the campaign should demand. But the end came sooner than was anticipated. Lee's defence of Petersburg collapsed, and the surrender of his decimated, ragged, and hungry, but bravely persistent troops, was made at Appomattox Court-House, April 9, 1865.

About a month before this, on the 13th of March, General Hancock had received further official recognition of his services in the form of a brevet to Major-Generalship in the regular army, given "for gallant and meritorious services at the battle of Spottsylvania."

The sketch of General Hancock's military services during the active period of the Rebellion cannot be better closed than with the following picture of him, as a man and as a commander, by one who knew and served under him:—

"General Hancock appears the very beau ideal of the soldier. His figure is tall and finely shaped. His eye is clear, blue, inquiring, benignant in repose, but inspiring in danger and in earnestness. In manners, no man ever surpassed him. He is the embodiment of knightly courtesy, yet his dignity is of the simple republican type that reminds one of the ideal Cincinnatus. No young officer, with apprehensions, for the first time, ever reported to him and went away with any other feeling than that Hancock was the man he wanted to serve under for life.

"To his subordinates he was always kindliness itself. He put one at his ease at once; gave confidence; made a man think better of himself; made him think he amounted to a good deal more than he ever before suspected. This was one of the great secrets of Hancock's success on the field. The men and officers all felt that they had come in personal contact with their commander; that they had made him think they were brave, good, reliable men; and when the crisis came, they would rather die than destroy that opinion. Hancock's reproof, on the other hand, was not a thing to be wished for twice. He was severe in his requirements, and sometimes made his colonels and generals wish that they were anywhere but under the plain severity of his talk. Yet after the lesson was taught, the wound was at once healed by some attention, so kindly and so gracious, that the object of it felt at last that he had really gained by the transaction.

"Thus he was to his subordinates. What he was to his superiors is a matter of history. No more loyal executor of orders ever bestrode a horse. There are brilliant reputations whose dead and living owners owe them to that loyal performance of duty. He went forward cheerfully, without murmuring or questioning, in the accomplishment of what was assigned to him, from first to last, willing to do anything and be anything in the service of his country. Hancock's first Division Commander, that splendid veteran and stubborn fighter, who was himself generally in hot water with his official superiors, Major-General 'Baldy' Smith said of Hancock: 'He was the most loyal subordinate I ever knew. He always tried to carry out his orders in their spirit as well as to the letter, and whatever he might think of them, when he received them they became his own and a part and parcel of himself.'

"Happy for the Republic had it more sons, more soldiers, and more statesmen like this!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Hancock as a Commander.— The Love and Admiration of his Soldiers for their General.—"A Soldier's Duty is to Obey and Fight."— General Walker describes his Character and Habits.— Custer Sketches him at Williamsburg.— "Gentlemen, Charge with the Bayonet."— The Secret of Hancock's Genius.— The Invincible Second Corps.— An Incident of Gettysburg.

General Hancock was a commander who secured not only the confidence, but the love and admiration of his troops. He was of splendid appearance, and of a most magnetic manner. He was, moreover, sympathetic as well as strict, kindly as well as stern, and, beyond all, he impressed all who came in contact with him with his thorough earnestness. There was not a soldier in his largest command who would not die happy under Hancock's approving eye; there was not one who failed to feel the electric shock which ran through the whole line when Hancock rode into sight on the field of battle.

One of those who served under him says: "He was universally beloved by his soldiers. There was not a man, from a private to the highest officer, that did not admire him. He was one of the strictest disciplinarians in the army. One instance I remember. In the fall of 1864, during the campaign of Lincoln and McClellan, the officers and soldiers indulged in pretty free discussions of the conduct of the war on the part of the administration. Hancock issued a general order, which

was read to every regiment, commanding that all this should cease. 'Our first duty,' he said, in substance, 'is to stop the Rebellion, not to talk. When the war is over you can criticise as much as you like. Until then, a soldier's duty is to obey and fight.'"

It was this strict conscientiousness, this unswerving purpose to compel respect for what is right, which gave the foundation to the noble character of General Hancock. He was, first of all, true to himself, in the highest sense of that phrase. He could conceive of no deviation in the slightest degree from the straight path of honor for himself, and he could not tolerate it in others. He personified moral force as clearly and vividly as he did physical courage.

Gen. Francis A. Walker, who has had charge of the taking of the United States census of 1870 and 1880, was on General Hancock's staff at one time during the war, and, like every one else who came to know him, was filled with admiration of the soldier and respect for the man. General Walker says of him: "General Hancock was an ideal commander. His presence in the camp or along the line was like an impulse which every soldier felt. It seemed to travel through the army like a great wave. It is needless to say that he was everywhere beloved and admired. It was impossible for it to be otherwise when one saw the force of his character and his enthusiasm and energy. As a military genius he was a tactician of great skill and adroitness, as well as an executor of energy and power. It is seldom that you find these qualities in one man, for it is generally considered as incompatible that a

sagacity which was almost cunning should be combined with dash and industry. General Hancock possessed both to a high degree."

At the breaking out of the war, that wild, dashing, and wonderfully versatile young cavalry leader, Gen. George A. Custer, was a cadet at West Point. He was a fiery young fellow, full of animal spirits, and at once applied to be sent to the field; this application, moreover, serving to relieve him from the unpleasant duty of appearing to answer before the stern professors at the military academy for a madcap escapade in which he had then recently indulged. So he was sent down to General Smith's headquarters in the Army of the Potomac, to make himself useful and wait for a more definite assignment. There he fell in with General Hancock, and the two seemed to appreciate each other. Hancock was Custer's senior by twenty years at West Point; but they had one element of character in common which certainly attracted the younger man to the veteran. This was an utter absence of self-consciousness in time of danger. In Custer's case, this approached recklessness; in Hancock, it was so combined with more substantial traits as to become simply one of the illustrations of his sublime strength of character.

It is interesting to read some of Custer's sketches of his experiences with Hancock, they are at once so free and so fresh. One of these, left among his posthumous papers when he met his cruel fate on the Rosebud, describes Hancock on the day when he had turned the flank of the Confederates at Williamsburg and awaited

events with the whole rebel army in front of him and a small brigade of sixteen hundred of his own men by his side. Custer wrote : —

" Hancock's orders prevented him from advancing beyond the position he then held. The strength of his forces, however, would not have justified him in proceeding against Fort Magruder unless closely supported by at least twice his own numbers. His position was such, however, that with a reasonable force at his command, Fort Magruder, and consequently the enemy's entire line, was untenable the moment he chose to advance. Fully impressed with the importance of the point he held, Hancock, as early as eleven o'clock, sent a staff officer back to represent the situation of affairs and to request reinforcements. The request was delivered to General Smith, the division commander, who, heartily approving of Hancock's views, urged General Sumner, then senior officer on the field, to grant the request. General Sumner, anxious regarding Hooker's position on the left, declined, and instead directed Hancock to hold his ground, but not to advance.

" Again Hancock sent a staff officer, urging in stronger terms the importance of promptly reinforcing him in order that he might at once decide the battle by driving the enemy from their works. From his position to Sumner's headquarters, by the circuitous route necessary to be taken, was several miles. Hancock awaited the reply to his second appeal with unfeigned anxiety. It came, and instead of acceding to his request, it directed him to relinquish the vantage-ground already gained, and which furnished the key to the enemy's position, and to retire to the redoubt covering the crossing over the dam. It was two o'clock when the last messenger arrived.

" Those who have seen Hancock when affairs with which

he was connected were not conducted in conformity with his views, can imagine the manner in which he received the order to retire. Never at a loss for expletives, and with feelings wrought up by the attendant circumstances, Hancock was not at all loath to express his condemnation of the policy, which, from his standpoint, was not only plainly unnecessary, but, in the end, must prove disastrous. His was a difficult position to occupy, so far as he personally was concerned. After receiving the order to withdraw, rendered more imperative from the fact of its being a reply to his request for authority and troops to enable him to advance, his first duty as a soldier was to obey. His judgment rebelled against such a course, and urged him to remain and make one more effort to secure the adoption of his views. The responsibility was great; but he assumed it, trusting to events to justify his course. Another staff officer was sent back, bearing a most urgent appeal from Hancock for assistance, and more fully explaining the importance of his position. Taking out his watch, Hancock, in conversation with the writer, remarked, 'It is now two o'clock. I shall wait till four; if no reply reaches me from headquarters, I will then withdraw.'

"The moments flew by till an hour had elapsed since the departure of the last messenger, and still no reply from headquarters. Hancock's impatience, of which he has ever seemed to have an inexhaustible supply, increased with each passing moment. But little was going on in his front save the usual sharpshooting between skirmishers at long range; yet each discharge of a musket seemed to add to the anxiety of him whose imperturbability has never rendered him remarkable.

"A fourth staff officer was despatched at a gallop to hasten, if possible, the expected and long-hoped-for message from 'Old Bull,' as General Sumner was familiarly termed by the entire army. Messenger after messenger was ordered upon this errand, until the hour-hand marked the hour of

four, and still no orders came. It was hard for the young brigade commander to relinquish the victory which he justly believed was within his grasp. He had said he would withdraw at four o'clock, but when the hour arrived it found him still anxious and eager to carry out his first plan of battle, and, with a faltering hope, he said, 'I will wait a half hour longer; if no orders reach me during that time, I must retire.'

"He was then without a staff officer, — aids, adjutant-general, and all having been hurried back for orders and reinforcements."

There is a peculiar charm in getting such a glimpse of the "superb Hancock" as this sketch affords, drawn by a young trooper who regarded less the dignity than the fun of every situation, and who pictures Hancock not as a demi-god, but as very much a man.

We all know what was the outcome of Hancock's anxious waiting behind the Confederate works at Williamsburg. Reinforcements did not come, and he had to meet alone the charge of Longstreet's and Early's troops. But Custer describes it in such an entertaining way, throwing such strong side-lights on Hancock's feelings and actions at this time, that we reproduce his story:—

"The enemy were advancing rapidly and confidently. Hancock, deprived of the assistance of every member of his own staff, none having returned from the division commander, busied himself by riding along the line encouraging his men and urging them to do their duty in the fast approaching struggle. 'Aim low, men—aim low,' was his oft-repeated

injunction; and, 'Do not be in a hurry to fire until they come nearer.'

"Although the enemy had advanced nearly a thousand yards across an open and nearly level plain, within easy range of the guns of Hancock's men, the latter permitted them to approach undisturbed.

"Hancock, realizing to the fullest extent his precarious situation, strove in every possible manner to inspire his troops with confidence. To him the coming contest was destined to become more than an ordinary victory or defeat: if the former, all would be well, and no unhappy criticisms would follow him; if defeat—and defeat under the circumstances implied the loss or capture of most if not all of his command—then death upon the battle-field was far preferable, to the sensitive and high-minded soldier, to the treatment which would be meted out to him who, in violation of positive orders had repeatedly declined to withdraw his command, but had remained until obedience was no longer practicable, and his command was threatened with annihilation. It was probably with thoughts of defeat, and its personal consequences of a court-martial for disobedience of orders, that at the moment when the fighting on both sides became terribly in earnest, and the firing loudest, Hancock, galloping along his lines, hat in hand, the perfect model of a field-marshal that he has since proven himself to be, in tones which even the din of battle could not drown, appealed to his troops, saying, 'Men, you must hold this ground, or I am ruined.' It was but the utterance of the thought that was passing through his mind at that moment, and it neither checked nor added to the ardor with which Hancock deports himself in battle. His brilliant, dashing courage, displayed upon scores of battle-fields since the one here referred to, has shown that he requires no personal motive to inspire him to deeds of heroism. The Confederates, with a courage which has never been sur-

passed by the troops upon either side, boldly advanced, delivering their fire as rapidly as possible, and never ceasing to utter their inspiring battle-cry.

"About forty yards in front of Hancock's line, and parallel to it, was an ordinary rail fence. The advanced line of the Confederates reached this fence; and had they been less brave, or had they been the veterans of either army, who four years later had been thoroughly schooled into the idea that breastworks and courage were almost inseparable adjuncts in the art of war, it is probable that their advance would never have crossed the fence, but, protected by the questionable cover of the rails, would have made a stand, and from there returned the terribly destructive fire their enemies were pouring into their ranks. The fence seemed to offer no obstacle, however, to the assaulting column, which still advanced, as it had started, in four heavy lines.

"But thirty paces now separated the contending forces, and neither exhibited signs of wavering. The Confederates were losing ten to one of the Federals; the latter, unlike the former, delivering their fire from a halt, and with deliberate aim.

"When within twenty paces of the Federal troops, the fire of whose guns remained unabated, the Confederates, whose ranks had been terribly thinned, and who, from their long and rapid march across a heavy and yielding soil, added to their constant yelling since the opening of the attack, were much exhausted, now exhibited signs of faltering. The Federals, who but a moment before regarded victory as most doubtful, observed this hesitation, and gave forth cheers of exultation. Hancock, who had been constantly seen where the danger was most imminent, and who, with one exception, was the only mounted officer along the Federal line, saw that victory was within his grasp, and determined to resume the offensive. With that excessive politeness of manner which

characterizes him when everything is being conducted according to his liking, Hancock, as if conducting guests to a banquet rather than fellow-beings to a life-and-death struggle, cried out in tones well-befitting a Stentor: —

'*Gentlemen*, charge with the bayonet.'

"The order was responded to with a hearty cheer from the entire line, and immediately the men — no, the *gentlemen* — brought their bayonets down to the position of the charge, and moved forward to the encounter. The Confederates, already wavering, required but this last effort upon the part of their opponents to relinquish the contest. Not waiting to receive the charge, they began their retreat, which soon terminated in a rout. The Federals, less exhausted than their late assailants, were able to overtake and capture large numbers of the Confederates. They also captured one battle-flag, being, it is believed, the first battle-flag captured from the enemy by the Army of the Potomac. One of the French princes serving on General McClellan's staff, the Duc d'Orleans, arriving on the battle-field at this moment, was made the bearer of the captured colors to army headquarters."

General Walker is altogether a different sort of man from Custer. He is scholarly, quiet, and exact — a complete contrast to the untamed genius whose red-silk neckerchief used to flame so inspiringly at the head of his troopers. But General Walker, even while giving a statistician's estimate of his old commander, shows that enthusiastic admiration burns in his breast as well. In continuation of what we have before quoted, General Walker says: —

"General Hancock had all the instincts of a staff officer in

regard to keeping up the discipline and the condition of his command. He might have been the inspector-general, for the care he exercised. Then he had a perfect passion for what is known in the army as 'Papers.' I remember this from a very lively experience. Oftentimes, when I had worked twelve or fourteen hours during the day, and was nearly ready to drop, he would send for me, and for two hours longer he would keep me in his tent, going over a great mass of correspondence and orders. He had a love for all the details of the camp and of the march, and a capacity to receive and understand them. He was immensely particular, and a man who, generally speaking, paid apparently an unnecessary attention to nice points. Orders and letters must be written with the greatest punctilio and care, whether under a tree, in the rain, or in headquarters. He would do work that any other general would leave to his adjutant, giving a great deal of his time and personal attention to questions relating to regulations, to breaches of discipline, and to the various reports, even though of a routine nature. When in battle he never issued commands from the rear, but was on the field in person. Even after he had given an order he would himself see that it was carried out. This was not always the pleasantest position for a subordinate officer; but looking back now, I can see that Hancock's almost invariable success was due to this incessant wakefulness and vigilance. He knew what he wanted, and he knew that a single word misunderstood might cause disaster to his troops or make him lose a victory. He was not willing to run any risks."

General Hancock was worshipped by the men of the Second Corps. He had come to the command of that corps with a record as one of the most brilliant and successful fighters in the army. The most inspiriting legends of the war embalmed his name. His presence

brought confidence even in the most desperate circumstances, and under his command the troops realized that they were guided by a wise and masterful hand.

The wearers of the trefoil badge not only believed, they knew, that nothing could stand before them and Hancock, and a story which one of them tells about Gettysburg shows that they fully believed the enemy had the same appreciation of the invincibility of Hancock's corps. This is the story: "When Pickett's division made its charge, the Confederates only expected to meet raw troops. They had been told that the Army of the Potomac was not there, but the Union soldiers were merely Pennsylvania militia and recruits. Two Confederate generals led the charge, one named Barksdale, from Mississippi; and the other, whose name I forget, from Louisiana. Over the two lines of the front corps the enemy charged upon us and came up the ridge. The Louisiana general, the moment he saw our lines, recognized the ace of clubs on our caps, and shouted: 'My God, boys, we are lost! Here is the Army of the Potomac!' The next instant he fell from his horse, shot through the heart. The other general was also shot not many feet away. He lived a few minutes, and, as he lay on the ground, Hancock went over to him, and, bending down, received the dying man's last message to his wife, as well as a gold watch, which, in his last moments, he asked Hancock to forward with the message. It was a scene which I will never forget."

WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK.

PART IV.

THE STATESMAN.

CHAPTER I.

Hancock's Character. — How it Developed under the Influence of his Career. — His Inheritance of Patriotism. — A Man of the People. — His Strong Purpose in Life. — The Discipline of Army Service. — Learning to Obey and then to Command. — His Administrative Ability. — Knowledge of Men and Things. — A Well-rounded Character befitting a Democratic Statesman.

THERE now approached a period of General Hancock's life in which he was to display another phase of that grand character which has given him rank among the foremost public men of the age, and which has secured him recognition by the great constitutional party of the country as the fittest of its sons to take in his hands the guidance of the Republic. It was a further development of the great gifts of mind and of heart with which the Creator had endowed him; not a sudden or accidental phenomenon whose permanence could not be trusted, or a spasmodic or emotional impulse, aroused by the occasion, to vanish when the exciting cause should be removed.

And here it may be well to pause and review the growth and development of General Hancock's character, as shown in his public life, up to the time when his country, grateful for his valiant services in the hour of peril to the Republic on the bloody field of battle, sought the benefit of his wisdom and his moral courage to aid in preserving the peace which he had conquered.

We have seen how, in the life of Hancock, the boy gave promise of the man. He was a patriot by descent and by tradition. The blood of Revolutionary ancestors flowed in his veins. He was born on historic ground, with the memories of the great struggle for independence and the rights of man clustering thick about the valleys and hills and rivers of his native country. And of these memories his ancestors had formed part. The story of the hard fight of the poor colonists for freedom and for local self-government was his story; the legacy left him by those of his name and his blood who had battled and suffered by the side of Washington.

Further than this, he was a son of the soil. Neither riches nor a great name had come to him by descent. The honors which his ancestors bore were those of a patriot yeomanry, ennobled by intelligent labor and by an honorable performance of the duties of free citizens. He inherited an upright name, never tarnished by so much as a shade of falsehood or unworthiness; a sound intellect, and a physical constitution well fitted to match it. The scion of the race of sturdy Pennsylvania farmers was, as a boy, one of the best products of the land.

His early home influences fostered a proper and symmetrical development of his character. He had a good father and mother. They were poor, but not penurious. For the education of their children, no effort and no sacrifice were too great. They struggled, with brave hearts and earnest souls, and conquered a place for themselves and for their boys in the world.

Hancock was brought up amidst this earnest, wholesome, working life, in which labor was made cheerful, and a strong purpose moved every member of the little family to accomplish something for the common good. He learned to be helpful to others, to bear bravely what burdens came to his lot, to be true to himself whatever might happen, and to trust in God.

The parents of Hancock seem to have bred in him an honorable ambition which directed his career very distinctly; and when he left home for the West Point Academy he took with him a lofty purpose which found expression in earnest devotion to preparation for his chosen profession.

And then how eagerly he embraced the first opportunity of putting to the test the power which, even as a young lieutenant, he felt within him. His impulse to action was irresistible. He saw a career before him, and the spirit within him urged him forward to enter upon it and fulfil his destiny.

Hancock's character was such that whatever he put his hand to he must do it well, no matter what it cost him in labor or pain. As a youthful soldier in the Mexican war, he was eagerly first in the place of danger. He was not only daring, but brave; and the trait of persistence in what he knew to be his duty was strongly developed by this experience.

Then, after a long interval, in which the youth grew to manhood and acquired a knowledge of men and of the ways of the world, came the test of the Rebellion.

This found him on the western verge of the Union, amid a disloyal community, with scores of the brightest

and bravest of his old comrades going over boldly to the support of secession. Did he hesitate? Not for an instant. It was not even a choice that he made. It was a prompt utterance of his inbred belief, that this government of the people must be preserved, and that his talent, his strength, and his life belonged to the people to save his and their priceless inheritance.

Hancock was essentially and thoroughly a Democrat. It was his creed by inheritance, by education, and by the force of his instructed conscience. An "indestructible union of indestructible States" was what he believed in. It was that for which his ancestors fought, that which he had sworn to preserve, and that which formed the basis of the great Republic. It was as a Democrat that he hastened to the preservation of this Union, gave his best energies, and shed his blood in its preservation.

In the war of the Union, Hancock developed those rare administrative powers which made him the model commander as well as the brave soldier. It was not alone his dashing personal valor which brought him so rapidly to high command. Others possessed this quality and yet never rose. It was his solid character, his true wisdom, which gave into his hands such vast responsibilities.

In this hard school of war he showed that he possessed a judgment of men and of means that was quick and accurate; that he had fertility of resource and readiness in execution; that he could rule men with justice as he could lead them with brilliant valor.

And when it was necessary to stir the people to a

greater earnestness in filling up the depleted ranks of our volunteer army, it was Hancock who was chosen to visit Legislatures, to meet in consultation with merchants and business men, to organize public meetings, and to present to the loyal but weary North, in an effective manner, the necessities for further effort. It was a mission as far removed as possible from the work of leading troops to the assault of a salient, and probably no general commander in the Union army could have succeeded as did Hancock. But here, as in every field to which he had been called in the performance of his duty, Hancock showed an ability which conquered success.

He, so essentially a man of the people, showed himself in every station a ruler of the people by his native force, his wise judgment, his close knowledge of men and of things.

Up to the point to which we have now followed his course, we have seen his character develop in strength and power, not merely as a brilliant soldier, or as a self-sacrificing patriot, but as a strong man and a wise administrator. He was soon to be called to duties which should test his statesmanship in the sharpest way, and prove whether his belief in the principles on which our Republic is founded was intelligent and substantial, or misty and unstable. How nobly he proved himself, the records of the Republic tell.

CHAPTER II.

Assassination of President Lincoln. — Arrest and Trial of the Conspirators. — Execution of Mrs. Surratt. — Charges of Cruelty against General Hancock. — Mrs. Surratt's Counsel makes a Statement. — Also her Spiritual Adviser. — General Hancock's Tenderness toward the Unfortunate Woman and her Daughter. — He posts Couriers to Carry a Pardon. — His Grief and Anxiety.

Before General Hancock was called upon to assume those administrative duties whose performance has given him world-wide fame as a civil executive, he had to pass through an ordeal which tested his powers and proved his strength of character under the most trying circumstances, and in a period of the greatest excitement.

His headquarters were still in the valley of the Shenandoah, when, on April 14, 1865, the conspiracy against the administration culminated in the assassination of President Lincoln, and the grievous wounding of Secretary Seward. The whole people were never before so shaken and unnerved, even when confronted with the severest disasters in the field, as on that dreadful Friday in April, 1865. It seemed to most patriotic people as though the sun of liberty had gone into perpetual eclipse. A feeling of such universal fear and distrust pervaded the nation, that men looked in each other's faces with the despair which comes over the

soul when nature experiences some awful cataclysm, and when there is no longer any hope for mankind.

General Hancock was summoned at once to Washington. The extent of the conspiracy soon became known, and the measures taken by him to confront the secret peril were thorough, and contributed greatly to allay the terror. When Hancock's presence in Washington was known over the country, as it soon was announced by telegraph, men said to each other, "Thank God, a man is in Washington now who can be trusted in any emergency."

General Hancock remained in Washington, by order of President Johnson, during the days of the trial of the conspirators, and until after their execution. He was military commander of the District, having under him about one hundred thousand men, with the President and the Secretary of War only as his superiors. But with the trial of the prisoners, or with their watching and care, he had nothing to do. General Hartranft was the commander of the Arsenal in which they were confined, and he, as Provost-Marshal of the District, attended to the details of their imprisonment, and, after the sentence, carried out the execution of the death-penalty. General Hancock simply transmitted the order for the execution as it came to him from his superior officer, the President of the United States.

There is little doubt entertained by unprejudiced men, now that the fever of excitement has passed away, that the execution of Mrs. Surratt was a murder under the forms of military law. But it is unjust to charge the blame for this horrible error upon Secretary Stan-

ton and his "Department of Justice," cruel and vindictive as the Secretary of War and his agents showed themselves on many occasions. For back of them there was a terrible popular cry for blood. The circumstances were peculiar. For the first time in the history of the American Republic, assassination had been resorted to as a remedy for what were considered political wrongs; and even the sober judgment of the people was shaken by this terrible development. Had Stanton been a different man, he might have restrained, or at least stood firm against, this loud clamor for victims, although it came with the most merciless reiteration from the party on whom he depended. It was, indeed, more the work of Stanton's party than of the revengeful Secretary himself.

General Hancock's share in this tragedy was, as we have stated, only that of a spectator charged with maintaining the peace and order during the operations of the judicial and executive departments. And at this late day, it is only ignorance of history which can excuse such animadversions upon his course as have been made in some quarters. As a soldier, he had a peculiar abhorrence of the idea of executing the penalty of death upon a woman; and while, of course, the whole business was entirely outside of his sphere, he yet did what he could, as military commander, to facilitate the communication of Mrs. Surratt with her counsel and friends, and interested himself by advice to her daughter, and by providing for the quick transmission of a pardon or a reprieve, which, up to the last moment, he hoped might be granted.

The counsel of Mrs. Surratt, her spiritual advisers, and the protector of her unfortuate daughter, join in warm praise of General Hancock's sympathetic words and acts on this occasion; but the whole story is so clearly and effectively set forth in recent correspondence, that we prefer to let the actors in that terrible drama speak for themselves.

On the 17th of July, 1880, Hon. T. W. Bartley of Washington addressed a letter of inquiry to Hon. John W. Clampitt, of Illinois, the only surviving one of the counsel who defended Mrs. Surratt, asking his statement of the relations of General Hancock to the sad affair. Judge Clampitt promptly responded, under date of July 22. This correspondence is herewith given: —

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 17, 1880.

JOHN W. CLAMPITT, ESQ., Highland Park, Lake County, Ill.:

DEAR SIR, — As you were the counsel for Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, on her trial before the Military Commission at Washington in 1865, and also were, as I am informed, present and cognizant of all that took place on the trial, and connected with the proceedings up to the time of the execution, permit me to inquire and ask of you a candid statement of the facts, as to the relative position and conduct of Gen. W. S. Hancock from the time of the commencement of the trial until the execution; also, as to alleged acts of unkindness of the General towards Mrs. Surratt, her daughter Anna, and her spiritual adviser, on the morning or day of the execution; and whether the responsibility for the organization of the Commission, and for the trial and execution rested entirely on and was assumed by the President and Secretary of War and the Judge-Advocate-General; and whether, in the events

which took place connected therewith, General Hancock had any discretion or responsibility whatsoever.

Your prompt reply hereto will be an additional act of yours in the cause of justice and truth.

Very respectfully, etc.,

T. W. Bartley.

Highland Park, Lake County, Ill., July 22, 1880.

Hon. T. W. Bartley, Washington, D. C.:

My Dear Sir, — Your letter of the 20th inst. is at hand, requesting from me, as I was counsel of that most unfortunate lady, Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, a candid statement of the facts connected with her trial before the Military Commission at Washington in 1865, and relating to the position and conduct of Gen. W. S. Hancock from the time of the commencement of the trial until the execution; also, to the alleged unkindness of General Hancock to Anna, the daughter of Mrs. Surratt, on the morning of the execution, and to her spiritual adviser; and, further, whether the responsibility for the organization of the Commission, and for the trial and execution, rested entirely on and were assumed by the President and his legal advisers; and whether, as to those matters which took place, General Hancock had any discretion or responsibility whatsoever. I desire to state in reply, that it affords me great pleasure to accede to your request. I was counsel for the late Mrs. Surratt, and took a deep interest in her case, and the important facts connected with the trial, — and its principal actors, because known to me, — some of which bear directly upon the inquiries contained in your letter. As the only surviving counsel of that deeply-wronged lady, and one who was present at each day of the prolonged trial, and conversant with all its details, my testimony may be of interest in the establishment of truth and the furtherance of justice.

The order originating the Military Commission which tried and condemned Mrs. Surratt, was from the President of the United States, and as follows, to wit: —

"EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON CITY, May 1, 1865.

"*Whereas*, The Attorney-General of the United States hath given his opinion that the persons implicated in the murder of the late President Abraham Lincoln, and the attempted assassination of the Hon. William H. Seward, Secretary of State, and in an alleged conspiracy to assassinate other officers of the Federal Government at Washington City, and their aiders and abettors, are subject to the jurisdiction of, and lawfully triable before a Military Commission; it is ordered: *First*, that the Assistant Adjutant-General detail nine competent military officers to serve as a Commission for the trial of said parties, and that the Judge-Advocate-General proceed to prefer charges against said parties for their alleged offences, and bring them to trial before said Military Commission. That said trial, or trials, be conducted by the said Judge-Advocate-General, and as recorder thereof, in person, aided by such assistant and special judge-advocates as he may designate; and that said trials be conducted with all diligence consistent with the ends of justice, the said Commission to sit without regard to hours. *Second*, that Brevet Major-General Hartranft be assigned to duty as special Provost Marshal-General, for the purpose of said trial, and attendance upon said Commission, and the execution of its mandates. *Third*, that the said Commission establish such order or rules of proceeding as may avoid unnecessary delay, and conduce to the ends of public justice.

(Signed) "ANDREW JOHNSON."

By special orders No. 211, from the War Department, through the office of the Adjutant-General, a Military Commission was appointed to meet at Washington, on Monday, the eighth day of May, for the trial of David E. Harold, George A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, Michael O'Laughlan, Edward Spangler, Samuel Arnold, Mary E. Surratt, Samuel A. Mudd, and such other prisoners as might be brought

before it, charged with the murder of the late President Abraham Lincoln, and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, William H. Seward, etc.

The detail for the Military Commission by the President was as follows:—

Major-General David Hunter, U. S. Volunteers.
" " Lewis Wallace, U. S. Volunteers.
Brevet Major-General A. V. Kautz, U. S. Volunteers.
Brigadier-General Albion P. Howe, U. S. Volunteers.
" " Robert S. Foster, U. S. Volunteers.
Brevet Brigadier-General Jas. A. Ekin, U. S. Volunteers.
" " " T. M. Harris, U. S. Volunteers.
Brevet Colonel C. H. Tompkins, U. S. Army.
Lieutenant-Colonel David R. Clendenin, 8th Ill. Cavalry.
Brigadier-General Joseph Holt, Judge-Advocate.

John A. Bingham and Brevet Colonel H. L. Burnett appeared as Assistant Judge-Advocates.

The trial of the parties arraigned proceeded from day to day until its close, on the 30th of June, 1865, without further general or special orders affecting the *personnel* of the Commission, when the findings of the Commission were transmitted to the President of the United States, through the Secretary of War, for his approval.

On the fifth day of July, 1865, the President approved the findings of the Commission and ordered the execution of Mrs. Surratt, Payne, Harold, and Atzerodt, in the following military order, transmitted through the Adjutant-General of the army, to wit:—

"War Department, Adjutant-General's Office,
"Washington, July 5, 1865.

"To Major-General W. S. Hancock, United States Volunteers, Commanding the Middle Military Division, Washington, D. C.:

"*Whereas*, By the Military Commission appointed in paragraph 4 special orders No. 211, dated War Department, Adjutant-Gen-

eral's Office, Washington, May 6, 1865, and of which Major-General David Hunter, United States Volunteers, was President, the following persons were tried, and after mature consideration of evidence adduced in their cases, were found and sentenced as hereinafter stated, as follows:— (Here follow the findings and sentences in the cases of David E. Harold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and Mary E. Surratt)

"And whereas, the President of the United States has approved the foregoing sentences in the following order, to wit:—

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, July 5, 1865.

"The foregoing sentences in the cases of David E. Harold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and Mary E. Surratt are hereby approved, and it is ordered that the sentences in the cases of David E. Harold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne and Mary E. Surratt be carried into execution by the proper military authority, under the direction of the Secretary of War, on the seventh day of July, 1865, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 2 o'clock P. M. of that day.

(Signed)

"ANDREW JOHNSON, President."

"Therefore, you are hereby commanded to cause the foregoing sentences in the cases of David E. Harold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and Mary E. Surratt to be duly executed, in accordance with the President's order.

"By command of the President of the United States,

"E. D. TOWNSEND, Ass't Adjutant-General."

From the official proceedings it will be observed that General Hancock had nothing whatever to do with the organization of this Military Commission, nor was he in the slightest degree responsible for its organization, or the execution of its mandates; nor did he possess any discretion in the matters relating thereto in any degree whatsoever.

It is true that the order of the President directing the execution of the condemned parties was transmitted through the commandant of the military post to Major-General Hartranft, who had been designated by the President in Executive Order, dated May 1, 1865 (and above quoted), as a special Provost-Marshal for the purpose of said trial and attendance

upon said Commission and the execution of its mandates. It could not have been otherwise in feature and form, from the very nature of the military organization of the government and its regulations and rules of procedure. General Hancock was in command of a geographical Military Division, comprising several States, of which Washington City, where his headquarters had been located by the President's order, was a part at the time Mrs. Surratt was sentenced to death. Being chief in command of that Military Division, the order of the President, through the War Department, had inevitably to pass through him for transmission to the officer specially designated by the same authority (Ex. Order, May 1, 1865) to execute the mandates of the Commission that condemned Mrs. Surratt to death.

It is a notable fact that Brevet Major-General Hartranft, and not Major-General Hancock, gave the verbal order of execution, after first reading, while standing on the platform beside the prisoners, the findings of the Military Commission and the President's order of approval.

I was an eye-witness to the execution, and assert these facts as beyond contradiction. In this General Hartranft performed his duty as the subordinate officer of the President from whom he had derived his powers as Special Provost-Marshal. The functions of General Hancock were purely ministerial as the "Commandant of the Military Post," etc., and not judicial, and he took no part in the execution. The act, which was performed in obedience to an order of the President, was not Hancock's act, but the act of his superior, having power to command. The President's order for the execution of Mrs. Surratt was not the order of Hancock, but was the President's order, and was made on the responsibility of the President. The responsibilty of that order rested with Andrew Johnson, and his ill-advisers; and Andrew Johnson is in his grave.

It has been suggested that General Hancock should have resigned rather than have been the passive medium through which the order for execution was transmitted. There can be no weight in that suggestion. He was in command of the post, and had many and diversified duties and responsibilities to perform; and no soldier, no citizen in fact, can properly avoid the performance of his duty by deserting the post to which that duty belongs, on account of the order of a superior over whom he has no control.

No officer of the army has the right to resign his commission at his own pleasure, as every intelligent citizen knows. He may tender it, but it remains with the government to accept, when, where, and how it pleases. The 24th paragraph, Art. 5, of the United States Army Regulations, says:—

"That any officer, who, having tendered his resignation, shall, prior to due notice of the acceptance of the same by the proper authority, and without leave, quit his post, or proper duties, with the intent to remain permanently absent therefrom, shall be registered as a deserter, and punished as such."

In this instance, General Hancock retained his post and performed his duty.

As the counsel of Mrs. Surratt, I can testify of my own knowledge, that he was deeply moved in her behalf, and distressed on her account. As to the point, whether, on the morning of the execution of Mrs. Surratt, he refused her the privilege of having the spiritual consolation of her religion, by denying her the assistance of a priest, this charge I know to be untrue, and it is effectually refuted by the testimony of the Rev. J. A. Walter, her spiritual adviser, which has come to my knowledge. This testimony is in the form of a letter addressed by Father Walter to General Hancock, dated Washington, Nov. 14, 1879, which has been published, in

which he completely refutes the charge. I quote a portion of his letter as follows, to wit:—

"I am at a loss how to account for this malicious report. I have always believed you to be too much of a Christian and gentleman to suppose for a moment that you would interfere with any one's religious feelings, much less in the case of this unfortunate lady for whom you showed much sympathy. Duty which I owe to truth, and strict justice to you, compel me to deny these false charges, and exonerate you from all blame."

In corroboration of the foregoing explicit statement of Rev. J. A. Walter, I can add my own testimony establishing the fact of the presence of her spiritual advisers; as on the morning of the execution, and just previous to that terrible event, when I came to bid her "Good-by," and pressed her hand in parting, it was in the presence of Fathers Walter and Wiget, whose holy serenity seemed to fill her cell with a heavenly light.

As to the charge that General Hancock refused to obey the writ of habeas corpus, sued out by me as the counsel of Mrs. Surratt before Judge Wylie, I know this to be wholly groundless. The records of the Court show that on the morning of the execution, upon proper application, at the early hour of two o'clock, Judge Wylie with characteristic firmness issued the writ of habeas corpus, ordering the Commandant of the Military District in which she was confined to produce the body of Mrs. Surratt in his Court at ten o'clock (the hour of execution having been named in the order as between ten A. M. and two o'clock P. M. of the same day). This writ was by me handed to the Marshal of the District of Columbia, at a very early hour in the morning. It is a fact sustained by the records of the Court, that General Hancock appeared in obedience to that summons before his Honor Judge Wylie, accompanied by the Attorney-Gen-

eral of the United States, who, as the representative of the President, presented to Judge Wylie the following return, which was an executive order suspending the writ of habeas corpus, to wit:—

"EXECUTIVE OFFICE, July 7, 1865, 11 o'clock, A. M.

"TO MAJOR-GENERAL W. S. HANCOCK, Commanding, etc.:

"I, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, do hereby declare that the writ of habeas corpus has been heretofore suspended in such cases as this; and I do hereby especially suspend this writ, and direct that you proceed to execute the order heretofore given, upon the judgment of the Military Commission, and you will give this order in return to this writ.

(Signed) "ANDREW JOHNSON, President."

It is thus seen how false is the charge that General Hancock refused to obey the writ issued by Judge Wylie. The very reverse is the truth. Not only did he obey the writ, so far as he was permitted to do so, thus subordinating the military to the civil power of the government, but so prompt and clear was the performance of his duty, in the estimation of the Court, that Judge Wylie complimented him on his ready obedience to the civil authority, and discharged him from the process because of his own inability to enforce the order of the Court.

Judge Wylie acquiesced in the suspension of his writ by the President, and declined to go any further. General Hancock's appearance before the Judge showed his respect for the civil process of the Court; and it became his duty to present to the Judge the order of the President suspending the writ, and to know whether he would submit to or reject the suspension of the writ. If Judge Wylie had said that he would consider the question of validity of the order suspending the writ when Mrs. Surratt was brought before him, and directed her to be brought into Court, General Hancock

would doubtless have produced the body. But the Judge, complimenting the General for his respect for the civil authority, dismissed his proceedings here. There was not the slightest show of any disposition on the part of General Hancock to resist the civil process of the Court. The charge, therefore, that he refused to obey the writ, is without the slightest foundation in truth.

No one can at this time realize the extent of the popular frenzy and clamor for the execution of the parties condemned; and Judge Wylie showed great judicial integrity in awarding the writ at all under the circumstances. Had the order of the Court extended further, and Judge Wylie insisted upon the production before him of the body of Mrs. Surratt notwithstanding the order of the President, General Hancock might then have been chargeable with disobeying the process, had he refused; but no such further order was made, and General Hancock was dismissed by the Court from the process. What else could he have done? While he acted under the orders of the President, he submitted to and showed due respect for the judicial authority.

The question asked in newspaper discussions, why General Hancock was present at the Arsenal on the morning of the execution, is easily answered. The application for a pardon for Mrs. Surratt was expected to to be renewed that morning, and that on his own suggestion; and he deemed it proper to be at a convenient place to afford his aid in case of a pardon.

I was myself on the ground and deeply interested in all that occurred at the time, and I know the fact that General Hancock afforded to Mrs. Surratt every kindness in his power, and was anxious that she should be spared by a pardon, and he hoped for it up to the very last. And when Miss Anna Surratt called upon him at his hotel early on the morning of the execution, and asked him what she could do to save the life of her mother, he replied, "that there was but one thing

remaining for her to do, and that was to go to the President, throw herself on her knees before him and beg for the life of her mother." She did not ask General Hancock to accompany her to the President, nor could it have been expected, as that would be improper in him. And it was unnecessary, as her protector, Mr. Brophy, was with her. It has been stated that Miss Surratt thought his manner cold. His language to her certainly should convey any other idea. He was at that moment in a state of great perplexity as to the disposition of the writ of habeas corpus which had been served upon him, and suspended by the President, and he had but little time to make answer and return the same. To this fact may be ascribed his serious manner, taken for coldness.

The facts show that so deeply was General Hancock moved in the matter, that his feelings led him to believe it possible for the President to relent at the last moment; and should the President so act, that the reprieve might not arrive too late, but be borne swiftly on its mission of mercy, General Hancock had couriers stationed at points from the White House to the Arsenal, in order that if a pardon or respite should be issued by the President, at the last moment, it should reach its destination promptly and before the execution. This is the evidence of Gen. W. G. Mitchell, Chief of General Hancock's staff.

This evidence is corroborated by the sworn testimony of Mr. John P. Brophy, now at St. Louis College, N. Y., and at that time a resident of Washington City. Mr. Brophy was a friend of the family, and after the imprisonment of the mother he befriended the daughter, Anna. On the morning of the execution he met her at the Executive Mansion in the hope of seeing the President, whither she had gone at the suggestion of General Hancock to beg the life of her mother. Mr. Brophy, who did all in his power to befriend the hapless girl and aid the mother in her sorrowful condition, and who

is a gentleman of high character, testifies, under oath, as to the humanity displayed by General Hancock towards the unfortunate mother and daughter, on the morning of the execution. The following are extracts from his sworn statement: —

"On our way from the White House to the Arsenal, I noticed mounted soldiers at intervals along the route." These were the couriers, stationed by order of General Hancock, to convey to him any notice of reprieve from the President. At the Arsenal gate, he, accompanying Anna Surratt to bid her mother farewell, met General Hancock, who spoke to Anna, and, in a voice of subdued sadness, told her that he feared there was no hope of Executive clemency. He informed Mr. Brophy that he had, however, stationed mounted men all along the line to the White House for the purpose of hastening the tidings should the President at the last moment relent and grant a reprieve for Mrs. Surratt. He also stated to Mr. Brophy that, should a reprieve be granted by the President, it might be directed to him as Commandant of the Department, and that he would be at the Arsenal till the last moment to give effect to the same should it arrive.

Mr. Brophy further states that he is "impelled by a sense of duty to add his testimony to others in vindication of one who has been most unjustly assailed for alleged misconduct of which no brave man could possibly be guilty. That he is not a politician, but loves justice, and feels that he has done an act of simple justice to as knightly a warrior as ever 'saluted with his spotless sword the sacred majesty of the law.'"

And now, my dear Sir, I believe I have covered all the points of your inquiry in as brief and candid a manner as the importance and gravity of the subject demand.

There are many facts connected with the trial and execution which I have omitted as not within the scope of your inquiry. This much, however, is fully established: that

General Hancock was in no wise responsible for the organization of the Military Commission that condemned Mrs. Surratt to death; that her trial and execution rested entirely on the will and determination of the President and his constitutional advisers; and that General Hancock in all matters pertaining to the same had no discretion or responsibility whatsoever, nor could he, from his official position, have influenced or controlled them in the slightest degree. He never attended the sessions of the Commission, but was busily engaged in the diversified and extensive cares of the military command, which required his entire time and attention. As I attended the Commission every day of the trial, I know that he was never seen about the rooms of the Commission. General Hartranft attended on the Commission daily, and this he did as special Provost Marshal, so as to be under the immediate direction of the President and Secretary of War, instead of the Military Commandant of the Post.

In conclusion, permit a single reflection. The trial and execution spoken of were demanded at the time by the whole Republican party; the intensity of the public feeling and the infuriated demand for the execution of the condemned parties cannot now be realized; and President Johnson, Secretary Stanton, and Judge-Advocate-General Holt, who had the entire control of the matter, were acting under the dictates of that political party, and simply carrying out its imperative demands. How humiliating to the intellect of the country the reflection that the same political party that had the entire responsibility for the atrocious murder of that innocent woman, should now, for mere political effect, attempt falsely and most wrongfully to injure a brave soldier, who so often perilled his life to save the Union, by charging upon him misconduct for having in some way participated in that act which that whole party demanded and approved at the time!

For standing by Mrs. Surratt in her terrible ordeal. I my-

self felt the malignity and vengeance of that political party heaped upon my own head for the humble part I took; and, now, the attempt of these politicians falsely and unjustly to traduce General Hancock for a responsibility he never had, shows the utmost depravity of human nature. While their own hands are reeking with the blood of an innocent woman, which they had demanded with fiendish malignity, they seek to defame, for base purposes, one of the bravest heroes of the war, by the attempts to falsely implicate him in the infamy of their own crime.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN W. CLAMPITT.

Nothing needs to be added to this very comprehensive and detailed statement of Judge Clampitt. It shows not only General Hancock's kindness of heart and his unflinching performance of duty, but it illustrates his reverence for and loyalty to the civil power. Even amid such excitement as prevailed at that time, he recognized the supremacy of law, and yielded to the representatives of law his prompt obedience. His course during this trying ordeal is a credit alike to his heart and his conscience.

CHAPTER III.

Hancock again at the West.—He is Called back to take Command of the Fifth Military District.—The Stormy Condition of Politics at this Time.—Sketch of the Progress of Reconstruction.—The Quarrel between the Executive and Congress.—Military Rule Triumphant.—The South Divided up into Satrapies.—Sheridan Removed, and Hancock Called to take his Place.

The hour was now approaching when General Hancock would be called upon to display, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty and importance, the qualities of true statesmanship; when the cause of popular liberty and free government was to find in him the same dauntless defender that the cause of the Union had found.

Until the 10th of August, 1866, General Hancock remained in command of the Middle Department. Then he was transferred to the Department of the Missouri, taking command there, August 20. Here he displayed executive qualities involving nice tact and discrimination in settling complications arising between the returned Confederates and the State troops. Here, also, in March, 1867, he commanded an expedition against hostile Indians in Kansas and Colorado. During the same period he also served on several important army boards. He was then appointed by President Johnson to succeed General Sheridan in command of the Fifth Military District.

Before giving the history of General Hancock's

administration in this department, it is necessary to review the condition of affairs in the South and at Washington at that time.

The great question which then confronted the victorious North was that of the reconstruction of the Union. The Southern armies had surrendered and the Southern States were still unreconstructed territories under military government. It was apparent to all who had in view the welfare of the country, that the sooner these revolted States could resume their former loyal relations to the general government, the sooner would the ravages of war be obliterated, and prosperity to the whole country return. Various conflicting interests, mainly political, but some of them arising in the minds of disinterested men, through fear of the consequences of too sudden restoration of the Southern States to participation in the Federal power, contributed to delay and tended to a lengthened probation.

Under these conflicting influences, reconstruction progressed slowly. By the summer of 1865, however, all the lately insurgent States had governments of some sort that were recognized at Washington, and the impression prevailed that, under the policy of President Johnson, they would soon resume their proper places as loyal members of the Union. Before the meeting of the Thirty-ninth Congress, each of the States in which provisional governments had been established had elected and inaugurated a permanent government displacing the provisional appointments. In all cases the ordinance of secession was annulled or repealed by the State convention, slavery was forever

prohibited, the Confederate debt was repudiated, and the constitutional amendment adopted. Further than this, the laws of the old code restricting the civil rights of the negroes were repealed.

It would certainly seem that States which had participated, as States, in such a high office as the amendment of the Constitution of the United States, needed no further recognition of their existence on an equality as to powers with the rest; but such was not the view taken by those who controlled the legislation of Congress. Bitter antagonism was immediately aroused against President Johnson because of his efforts to bring back the rebellious States without subjecting them to the dangerous and destructive operation of a government through Congressional enactment. In December, 1865, the President had, in answer to a resolution of the Senate calling for information regarding the condition of the Southern States, replied that the rebellion had been suppressed, the United States courts restored, post-offices established, and steps taken to put in operation the revenue laws. The late Confederate States, he said, had reorganized their governments and were yielding obedience to the laws and government of the United States with more willingness and greater promptitude than under the circumstances could reasonably have been anticipated; and in nearly all the States measures had either been adopted or were then pending, to confer upon freedmen the rights and privileges essential to their comfort, protection, and security. "The people," he said, "throughout the entire South, evinced a laudable desire to renew their

allegiance to the government, and to repair the devastations of war by a prompt and cheerful return to peaceful pursuits. An abiding faith is entertained that their actions will conform to their professions, and that, in acknowledging the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States, their loyalty will be unreservedly given to the government whose leniency they cannot fail to appreciate, and whose fostering care will soon restore them to a condition of prosperity. From all the information in my possession, I am induced to cherish the belief that sectional animosity is surely and rapidly merging into a spirit of nationality, and that representation, connected with a properly adjusted system of taxation, will result in a harmonious restoration of the States to the National Union." The observations on which President Johnson based this message to Congress were made by General Grant and General Schurz who had been sent on a tour through the South for this especial purpose.

But Congress had a "Select Committee on Reconstruction," whose members quarrelled among themselves, and naturally quarrelled with the President. As it had been no purpose of the politicians who really ruled the war department during the four years previous, to bring the war to a speedy close, now it formed no part of the desire of these men to see the wounds of the war closed up by a prompt reconstruction of the lately rebellious States.

The first obstruction placed in the way of reconstruction was unnecessary delay in the report of this select committee. What ought to have occupied them no

more than a fortnight was made to consume six months; and when the plan of reconstruction was at last submitted, Jan. 22, 1866, it was only for the purpose of quarrelling still further over it. Meantime the Southern States were kept out of representation in Congress, although they had loyal men to send there, and one measure of aggravation was passed after another. The Freedmen's Bureau had its scope and powers enlarged by Congress, until it became a monstrous political machine; and then began the long contest between the Executive and Congress which ended in the attempt at impeachment. President Johnson very powerfully pictured the situation in his speech at Washington on the 22d of February, 1866. "An attempt," he said, "is being made to concentrate all power in the hands of a few at the Federal head, and thereby bring about a consolidation of the Republic, which is equally objectionable with its dissolution. We find a power assumed and attempted to be exercised of a most extraordinary character. We see now that governments can be revolutionized without going into the battle-field, and sometimes the revolutions most distressing to a people are effected without the shedding of blood; that is, the substance of your government may be taken away, while there is held out to you the form and the shadow. We find that by an irresponsible central directory nearly all the powers of Congress are assumed, without even consulting the legislative and executive departments of the government. . . . You have been struggling for four years to put down a rebellion. You contended at the beginning of that struggle that a State had not a right to go out.

You said it had neither the right nor the power; and it has been settled that the States had neither the right nor the power to go out of the Union. And when you determine by the executive, by the military, and by the public judgment that those States cannot have any right to go out, this committee turns around and assumes that they are out, and that they shall not come in."

The conflict between the President, supported by the best and wisest and most patriotic minds in the country, and a bitter, selfish, and cruel partisan majority in Congress, continued to gain in intensity; and after the fall elections in 1866 showed a majority for the opponents of reconstruction a new departure was taken. The famous Military Bill was passed. This bill declared that no legal State governments existed in the lately rebellious States, and that in these States there was no adequate protection for life or property. These States were therefore distributed into military districts, and placed under military government. The first district comprised Virginia; the second, North and South Carolina; the third, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida; the fourth, Mississippi and Arkansas; the fifth, Louisiana and Texas. The President was to appoint a commander for each district, and to detail a sufficient military force in his support. The duties of the commanders were, "to protect all persons in their rights of person and property, to suppress insurrection, disorder, and violence, and to punish or cause to be punished all disturbers of the public peace and criminals." To this end they were authorized to either allow local civil tri-

bunals to take jurisdiction of and try offenders, or, at their discretion, to organize military commissions for the trial of offenders, and this exercise of military authority should exclude interference on the part of the State government. The district commander was made an absolute despot, the only restraint put upon him being the requirement of the President's approval of any death sentence he might impose, before the execution could take place.

It will thus be seen that it was within the power of the military commander to treat the inhabitants of a Southern State according to the requirements of a military code, and very many well-meaning people believed that such a government should be exercised in the States lately in rebellion, during the lives of the present generation, or until the men lately in arms against the Union had, by a long probation, brought forth fruits meet for repentance. On the other hand, it was within the power of the military commander to give full effect to the local laws and civil regulations, only using his military power where the reign of law and order had not re-established itself, or where the men, recently the owners of other of their now freed fellow-men, were disposed to exercise over the latter a power which no longer belonged to them.

President Johnson, of course, vetoed this bill, as he did all the partisan and obstructive legislation of Congress; but it was passed over his veto. In his veto message he described the power given the military commander by this bill as "that of an absolute monarch, his mere will taking the place of all law; it

places at his free disposal all the lands and goods in his district, and he may distribute them to whom he pleases; he may make a criminal code of his own, and he may make it as bloody as any recorded in history, or he may reserve the privilege of acting upon the impulse of his private humors in each case that occurs. It is plain that the authority here given to the military officer amounts to absolute despotism. But, to make it still more unendurable, the bill provides that it may be delegated to as many subordinates as he chooses to appoint; for it declares that he shall 'punish or cause to be punished.' Such a power has not been wielded in England for more than five hundred years. It reduces the whole population of the ten States — all persons, of every color, sex, and condition, and every stranger within their limits — to the most abject and degrading slavery. No master ever had a control over his slaves so absolute as this bill gives to the military officers over both white and colored persons."

But when the bill was passed in spite of these objections, the President had no choice but to carry out its provisions. He therefore appointed Generals Schofield, Sickles, Pope, Ord, and Sheridan to be commanders of the five districts in the order named. An attempt was made to render the powers conferred by this bill less despotic, through an opinion of the Attorney-General construing the act; but Congress at once passed an "explanatory act" insisting upon the most radical construction of the law. Then the conflict became more bitter, and the President dismissed Secretary Stanton from his cabinet because of his hostility to the Execu-

tive policy, succeeding in forcing him out after an obstinate and indecent struggle on the Secretary's part. Then two of the district commanders, who had been most zealous in the use of the despotic power conferred upon them by Congress, were also removed. These were General Sickles, commanding the Second District, comprising North and South Carolina; and General Sheridan, the ruler of the Fifth District, comprising Louisiana and Texas.

General Sheridan lacked the calm judicial temperament necessary in one holding such a place. He had not the self-poise required to maintain a clear and level head there. Moreover, he was very much of a partisan in politics, and his fiery nature showed itself there as in the battle-field. It was a very poor choice that President Johnson made when he put Sheridan in command of the Fifth District, and the event proved the mistake. Sheridan lost his temper and his head, ruled the district like an autocrat, rode rough-shod over all civil law, and before he had been in power a fortnight, had gone far to reduce his district to the condition of a satrapy.

General Thomas was first chosen by the President to take the place of General Sheridan, but on his declination General Hancock was appointed.

CHAPTER IV.

Hancock takes Command of the Fifth Military District.— His Reception at Washington.— Speech at a Serenade.— The vast Powers placed in his Hands.— Absolute Ruler of two great States.— His Opening Proclamation.— The Famous "Order No. 40."— Judge Black's Letter.— The Principles of American Liberty find their Advocate.

It was under such peculiarly delicate and exciting conditions of public sentiment and of the governmental departments, that General Hancock was summoned to the service of his country in a capacity where the calmest judgment, the wisest patriotism, and the most practical experience of men and of affairs was needed. He proved equal to the task of carrying the burden of responsibility laid upon him.

General Hancock was summoned to Washington by order of the President assigning him to the command of the Fifth Military District, Aug. 28, 1867. The removal of Sheridan was strongly opposed by General Grant, who at that time had been taken in hand by the Radical Republicans and put in training for the Presidency as the candidate of the party which believed in the ascendancy of military over civil authority. But the high-handed proceedings of the military commander in the Fifth District, absolutely overriding and crushing out all civil authority, had created alarm among thinking people who believed that the war had been fought to save the Union and not to set up a military despot-

ism; and they hastened to do honor to Hancock, in whose stanch principles and strict integrity they had the same confidence they had in his valor.

They complimented him with a serenade on the 24th of September, prior to his departure for the South, at which he made one of those clear, straightforward, and manly speeches for which he is noted. Among other things he said: —

"I thank you for this testimony of your appreciation of my past services, and confidence in my ability to perform my duty in a new and different sphere. Educated as a soldier in the military school of our country, and on the fields of the Mexican war and American rebellion, I need not assure you that my course as a District Commander will be characterized by the same strict soldierly obedience to the law there taught me as a soldier. I know no other guide or higher duty. Misrepresentation and misconstruction arising from the passions of the hour, and spread by those who do not know that devotion to duty has governed my actions in every trying hour, may meet me. But I fear them not. I ask then, citizens, that I may not be judged in advance, and that time may be permitted to develop my actions. As a soldier I am to administer the laws rather than discuss them. If I can administer them in spirit with due charity to the governed and to the satisfaction of my country, I shall indeed be happy in the consciousness of a duty performed."

On the same occasion, Hon. Robert J. Walker addressed the assemblage, referring in his remarks to the known character of General Hancock and what might be expected of him. He said: —

"And now, fellow-citizens, General Hancock is entering upon a new career; and although his new trust is military,

still in point of name it has its civil duties, and imposes a task of the utmost difficulty in its proper fulfilment. He has truly said his duty is to carry out the laws of his country, and he has said wisely; because a soldier of the Republic most truly defends a country when he defends the laws of that country; and, fellow-citizens, he will not be a judge as to whether the law is wise and expedient, or as to whether it be otherwise. His duty is purely a ministerial duty — to carry out the laws as they are written.

"The judicial power, according to the Constitution, is vested exclusively in the courts of the country. They alone can pass final adjudication upon the law and say whether it is constitutional or not; but when a law is passed according to the forms prescribed in the Constitution, unless it be arrested by the decision of the judicial authorities, the executive officer must and is sworn to execute it as one of the laws of the country. But, fellow-citizens, while I am sure that General Hancock will execute the laws in a true spirit, and according to the meaning that must be placed upon them, I am also sure that he will do it in a spirit of charity and kindness."

With such pledges of devotion to the Constitution and the laws — welcome words in the ears of a public which had become too freely accustomed to have both derided as impotent in the presence of the military arm — General Hancock set out to assume command on the 29th of November.

In the Fifth Military Department there had been some few disturbances, caused by the natural opposition to the violent military rule of General Sheridan; and these, highly exaggerated in the reports of the partisan press, which was even then under a sort of

surveillance, had greatly excited the Northern people. General Hancock's predecessor had not hesitated to make the military arm felt superior to the civil law, and to construe the power given him by the Act of Reconstruction as absolute and irresponsible.

It is safe to say that almost any civil governor, not to say military man, finding himself clothed with such authority and backed up with ample forces, would have treated the unreconstructed and unrepentant rebels with the rigor which was expected of him by the party majority in Congress.

That such was not the course of General Hancock is the crowning credit of his life. It is no secret that he did not relish, much less covet, this command. His reputation as a soldier and a patriot was unsurpassed. He had the gratitude of all classes of Union men for his great services in the field, and it was believed that the Southern people would respect and obey his orders as they would those given by few others of the men who had subdued them. At the same time it was expected that so stern and unyielding a disciplinarian as Hancock, who always saw his orders carried out at the greatest personal exposure of himself, would brook no disorder, but would rule Louisiana and Texas with a stern and steady hand.

General Hancock obeyed his orders, and assumed command of the Fifth Military District. His first official act was to inform the people of Louisiana and Texas that he had come to be their Governor under the Reconstruction Act, and to let them know how he proposed to rule over them. He issued his celebrated

"General Orders No. 40," dated the 29th day of November, 1867.

Probably no more astonished and delighted people could be found than the people of Louisiana and Texas when the purport of that order came to be understood. They expected to have, what they had had before, a military dictator. They expected to be governed by "orders" instead of laws, and to live under a military despotism, instead of governing themselves by their own civil regulations.

General Hancock informed them that he took command in accordance with the orders he had received from the Headquarters of the Army, but that he did not propose to rule them by military orders at all. He congratulated the people of the South-West that peace and quiet reigned among them. To best preserve that state of things he proposed to let the civil authorities execute the civil laws. War he regarded as only necessary to destroy opposition to lawful authority; but when peace was established and when the civil authorities were ready and willing to perform their duties, the military power should cease to lead and the civil administration should resume its natural and rightful conditions. He declared himself solemnly impressed with the belief that the great principles of American liberty were the lawful inheritance of the whole people, and should forever continue to be. He declared that the right of trial by jury, habeas corpus, liberty of the press, freedom of speech, the natural rights of person and of property, should be preserved. He believed that free institutions, being essential to the prosperity

and happiness of the people, were themselves the strongest inducements to peace and order. He declared that the civil authorities and tribunals should have the consideration of and jurisdiction over crimes and offences, and should be supported in the exercise of that jurisdiction. But while thus recognizing the rights of the people, he announced, with soldier-like directness and brevity, that he should suppress armed insurrection and forcible resistance to law by force of arms at once.

The Order No. 40, issued at such a time and under such circumstances, is so admirably illustrative of General Hancock's turn of mind, so sincere, and withal so judicious, that we present it here in full :—

GENERAL ORDERS No. 40.

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Nov. 29, 1867.

1. In accordance with General Orders No. 81, Headquarters of the Army, Adjutant-General's Office, Washington, D. C., Aug. 27, 1867, Major-General W. S. Hancock hereby assumes command of the Fifth Military District and of the Department composed of the States of Louisiana and Texas.

2. The General Commanding is gratified to learn that peace and quiet reign in this department. It will be his purpose to preserve this condition of things. As a means to this great end he regards the maintenance of the civil authorities in the faithful execution of the laws as the most efficient under existing circumstances.

In war it is indispensable to repel force by force, and overthrow and destroy opposition to lawful authority. But when insurrectionary force has been overthrown and peace established, and the civil authorities are ready and willing to per-

form their duties, the military power should cease to lead, and the civil administration resume its natural and rightful dominion. Solemnly impressed with these views, the General announces that the great principles of American liberty are still the lawful inheritance of this people, and ever should be. The right of trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, the natural rights of persons and the rights of property must be preserved.

Free institutions, while they are essential to the prosperity and happiness of the people, always furnish the strongest inducements to peace and order. Crimes and offences committed in this district must be referred to the consideration and judgment of the regular civil tribunals, and those tribunals will be supported in their lawful jurisdiction.

Should there be violations of existing laws which are not inquired into by the civil magistrates, or should failures in the administration of justice by the courts be complained of, the cases will be reported to these headquarters, when such orders will be made as may be deemed necessary.

While the General thus indicates his purpose to respect the liberties of the people, he wishes all to understand that armed insurrection, or forcible resistance to law, will be instantly suppressed by arms.

By command of Maj.-Gen. W. S. Hancock.

[Official.]

This order, so novel in the history of the series of military usurpations known as reconstruction, was flashed all over the land that night, and every newspaper printed it the next morning. It was received with delight by all who truly believed in the supremacy of the ideas on which our Republic is founded. It was hailed as the presage of a return from the anarchy of

war to the safe rule of peaceful law. The policy of conciliation and restoration, which the lamented President Lincoln inaugurated, had received a serious check when he fell by the hand of the assassin. Andrew Johnson had honestly attempted to carry out the beneficent scheme which his predecessor originated, but had failed through lack of those qualities of intellect and of heart which enabled Lincoln to restrain party antagonism within limits, and to carry his point, and still retain the support of Congress and the confidence of the people. It was a dark day for constitutional government; and when, from among the military commanders who had been endowed with arbitrary power, there appeared one who refused to exercise this power otherwise than in the support of and subordinate to civil law, the announcement came as a beam of sunlight through the dark clouds that overhung the land.

Judge Black, one of the ablest constitutional lawyers our country has produced, sat down and wrote as follows to General Hancock, when he read that now famous "Order No. 40" in the morning papers:—

WASHINGTON, Nov. 30, 1867.

MY DEAR GENERAL:—This moment I read your admirable order. I am much engaged, but I cannot resist the temptation to steal time enough from my clients to tell you how grateful you have made me by your patriotic and noble behavior.

Yours is the first, most distinct, and most emphatic recognition which the principles of American liberty have received at the hands of any high officer in a Southern command. It has the very ring of the Revolutionary metal. Washington

never said a thing in better taste or better time. It will prove to all men that "Peace has her victories not less renowned than those of war."

I congratulate you,—not because it will make you the most popular man in America, for I dare say you care nothing about that,—but because it will give you, through all time, the solid reputation of a true patriot and a sincere lover of your country, its law and its government. This, added to your brilliant achievements as a soldier, will leave you without a rival in the affections of all whose good-will is worth having, and gives you a place in history which your children will be proud of.

This acknowledgment from me does not amount to much; but I am expressing only the feelings of millions, and expressing them feebly at that.

With profound respect,

Yours, etc.,

J. S. Black.

Major-General Hancock.

It was under such auspices that General Hancock began his administration in Louisiana and Texas. His first word was to proclaim the rule of law.

CHAPTER V.

Reception of "General Order No. 40."— Civil Government Resumes its Sway.— Hancock's Orders Develop the Capacity of the People for Local Self-Government.— The Laws to be Sustained by the Military Arm.— The Qualifications of Jurors.— Disposition of Property by the Courts.— Sale of a School Section.— Registration of Voters.— Effect of General Hancock's Orders.

It was on the basis of the principles enunciated in his "General Order No. 40," that General Hancock began and continued his administration in the Fifth Military District. These principles are immortal; they lie at the very foundation of our system of free government; and it was with delighted wonder, that the people of Louisiana and Texas heard from the lips of one in whom they had expected to find a military satrap, these patriotic and statesmanlike sentiments: "The right of trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, the natural rights of persons and the rights of property should be preserved."

They looked for a Cæsar, and they found in his stead the expounder and defender of the Constitutional laws of the fathers, and the exponent of the rights of the free men who speak the English tongue.

The effect on men so recently disbanded from armed rebellion, and now morose, soured, disappointed, and disposed to place obstacles in the way of any resumption of the old Federal relations, was electric. Louisi-

ana and Texas, for the time-being, moved forward on the road to reconstruction with brisk eagerness, outstripping their sisters; and had General Hancock remained in command, the disorders which followed, the misrule and contention, culminating in actual anarchy, and rendering Louisiana at last a fit instrument for the perpetration of a great crime, would not have taken place.

With admirable tact, and a keen sense of justice to the laws of the country, as well as to the people of Louisiana and Texas, he reconciled the differences that had previously prevailed, and which had had their origin in the abominable carpet-bag governments that, since the close of the war, had blighted those States. Instead of an oppressor, the Louisianians and Texans found in him a governor inspired by motives of the purest patriotism and of the highest justice.

The general order with which he opened his administration was a revelation to an oppressed, robbed, and humiliated people. There was everything in this order to produce a profound sense of gratitude in the hearts of those to whom it was addressed. Following it, came for awhile the blessings of peace and prosperity, and but for the fact that the administration at Washington removed General Hancock from his sphere of justice and beneficent government, the period of misrule in Louisiana and Texas would have come to an end ten years ago.

General Hancock maintained the purity and independence of the elections, refused to organize military commissions to take the place of judicial trials, and

would permit no military interference with civil administration. The mayor of New Orleans formally requested his interference by military order in certain proceedings against the corporation. General Hancock declined, on the ground that his interference would be unconstitutional, and could only be exercised in an emergency which did not, in his opinion, then exist.

He was requested by the general commanding the District of Texas, to order a military commission for the trial of a certain offender. He declined, stating as his reasons, that, while the act passed by Congress "for the more efficient government of the rebel States" made it the duty of commanders of military districts to punish disturbers of the public peace and criminals, that power, from the nature of things, should only be exercised when the local civil tribunals were unable or unwilling to enforce the laws, a supposition which did not exist, a State government in subordination to the United States being then in the full exercise of its powers in Texas.

General Hancock's predecessor had summarily, by military order, removed the clerk of a court, and had appointed another in his place. General Hancock revoked this order, on the ground that if there were any charges against the clerk so removed, the courts were competent to take action in the premises.

His predecessor had rendered the administration of justice inefficient, by instituting certain qualifications for persons to be eligible to do jury duty, such qualification being made by military order. General Hancock revoked the order, announcing that he would not per-

mit the civil authorities to be embarrassed by military interference.

In December he issued an order prohibiting military interference with the elections, unless when necessary to keep the peace at the polls, as being contrary to law; and he ordered that no soldiers be allowed to appear at any polling place, unless as citizens of the State, registered voters, and for the purpose of voting; but he ordered, further, that the commanders of posts act promptly in preserving the peace in case the civil authorities failed to do so.

Men, interested in civil controversies, in great numbers applied at the General's headquarters for interference, assuming on his part both the arbitrary power to interfere and the willingness to do so. General Hancock, by general order, again announced that the administration of civil justice pertained only to the regular courts, and that the rights of the litigants did not depend on his views as to the merits of their cases.

Having been appealed to by the Governor of the State to remove from office the president and members of the police jury of the parish of Orleans, they being charged with appropriating public funds to their own use, General Hancock reiterated the principle that these were matters pertaining to the civil administration, and should be solely dealt with by the courts.

The acts of General Hancock's administration were simply the development of this fundamental idea of popular government: That the people must govern themselves through the laws made by their chosen representatives, and that the sole duty of the military

arm was to prevent interference with the operation of these laws.

This was, indeed, a great change from the policy which had prevailed; but it was a wise change. Instead of accustoming the people to the sight of an authority superior to law, and thus breeding a contempt for law and for all forms of civil government, General Hancock taught them that the law was supreme; that it was competent to protect them; and that it would be maintained in its supremacy by the full force of the United States army, if needed.

Under the vicious system that had prevailed up to the time of his assumption of command in the Fifth District, the civil authority had been either utterly ignored or made a servile attendant on the military power. Hancock changed all this. He put away the power which was offered him, and proclaimed himself subject where he was commissioned to be autocrat. There has never been known a nobler sacrifice of ambition to patriotism than that which General Hancock showed when he stripped himself of all the extraordinary powers conferred upon him, and elevated civil government to its proper place of supremacy, pledging himself to maintain its authority with his life, if necessary. Grand as were his sacrifices in the cause of the Union when assailed by arms, his record as the civil administrator at a time when free, popular government seemed about to pass away from the land, is brighter yet.

The law under which he was acting as commander of the Fifth Military District allowed him, at his discre-

tion, to assume all the authority of civil administration. He could make and unmake judges and courts; could himself adjudicate cases of every description; could be, in his own person, the absolute autocrat of the two States under his rule; or he could sustain the civil authority, and permit a free, popular government to be maintained, in which the rights of all would be acknowledged. He preferred to relinquish power for himself, and to place it where it belonged.

The orders by which he carried out this beneficent change show so strongly the clear judgment, the fine perception, and the absolutely unwavering conscientiousness of the General, that we append a few for the purpose of illustration.

The people of Louisiana and Texas had been so long accustomed to look to the whim of the military commander for the settlement of all questions of law arising in the intercourse of man with man, and even in those larger matters in which municipal corporations were concerned, that they at once and continually besieged General Hancock with applications to settle this, that, and the other controversy, which belonged, not to the military, but to the civil branch of the government. Hancock invariably turned them over to the courts, with the information that whatever the law decided would be carried out, backed by all the force at his disposal.

Upon his arrival at New Orleans, General Hancock found that distrust of the courts, and contempt for the civil administration of justice, was largely caused by the unwise and arbitrary regulations, established by his

predecessor, concerning the qualifications of jurors for service in the several courts. He therefore at once revoked the regulations, in the order from which we make the following extract, showing that, from the first, he comprehended the situation, and knew that relief was to be obtained only by establishing civil authority on a basis that would command respect: —

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Dec. 5, 1867.

SPECIAL ORDERS No. 203.

. . . . . .

2. The true and proper use of military power, besides defending the national honor against foreign nations, is to uphold the laws and civil government, and to secure to every person residing among us, the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property. It is accordingly made, by act of Congress, the duty of the commander of this district to protect all persons in those rights, to suppress disorder and violence, and to punish, or cause to be punished, all disturbers of the public peace and criminals.

The Commanding General has been officially informed that the administration of justice, and especially of criminal justice, in the courts, is clogged, if not entirely frustrated, by the enforcement of paragraph No. 2, of the military order numbered special orders 125, current series, from these headquarters, issued on the 24th of August, A. D. 1867, relative to the qualifications of persons to be placed on the jury lists of the State of Louisiana.

To determine who shall and who shall not be jurors, appertains to the legislative power; and until the laws in existence regulating this subject shall be amended or changed by that department of the civil government, which the constitutions of all the States under our republican system vest

with that power, it is deemed best to carry out the will of the people as expressed in the last legislative act upon this subject.

The qualification of a juror, under the law, is a proper subject for the decision of the courts. The Commanding General, in the discharge of the trust reposed in him, will maintain the just power of the judiciary, and is unwilling to permit the civil authorities and laws to be embarrassed by military interference; and as it is an established fact that the administration of justice in the ordinary tribunals is greatly embarrassed by the operations of paragraph No. 2. special orders No. 125, current series, from these headquarters, it is ordered that said paragraph, which relates to the qualifications of persons to be placed on the jury lists of the State of Louisiana, be, and the same is hereby revoked, and that the trial by jury be, henceforth, regulated and controlled by the Constitution and civil laws, without regard to any military orders heretofore issued from these headquarters.

. . . . . .

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK.
[Official.]

Neither would he, as so many of the military commanders did, permit property and valuables to be placed in his hands, or in those of his subordinates, under circumstances where ordinarily the courts would assume control. His hands were always clean, and he would tolerate no suspicion of dishonesty, and give no opportunity for it among those about him. So, on the 16th of December, 1867, we find him issuing an order revoking one that his predecessor had made, and restoring the estate of a citizen of New Orleans to the

control of the local tribunals, and ordering that the property be turned over "to the possession of the party entitled to the same by the order of court."

As a further illustration of the matters which military governors had been accustomed to decide according to their humor at the moment, thus breeding in the people a distrust of popular government and a demoralizing habit of reliance on the will of one man in power, there was the case of the sale of a school section in Avoyelles Parish, on which the people had voted, but which was sent to General Hancock for approval or revocation. He replied, placing the whole matter in the hands of the citizens of that parish, just where the authority of right belonged. This is his decision on the question :—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF SECRETARY FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Dec. 28, 1867.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. WOOD, Commanding District of Louisiana, New Orleans, La.:

COLONEL,— I am directed by the Major-General Commanding to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Nelson Durand (forwarded by you), stating that the treasurer of Avoyelles Parish, La., caused an election to be held to ascertain if the citizens of the township were in favor of selling a school section belonging to the parish, and requesting an opinion as to the legality of said election.

In reply to said letter, I am directed by him to state that if the provision of the law were complied with in regard to advertisements, the manner of taking the sense of the inhabitants, and legal voters only were admitted to take part, there seems to be no reason why the action should be considered a nullity. It was not, properly speaking, an election, but a

way prescribed by law of arriving at the will of the community as regards the disposition to be made of certain school lands belonging to the parish.

The previous authorization of the Major-General Commanding is not considered necessary. But if the sense of the people was not duly regarded (on the previous occasion), as to the foregoing requirements, the matter should be again referred to them for a free and legal expression of their opinion.

I am, Colonel, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
W. G. MITCHELL,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

In the same way, when the Governor of Louisiana asked General Hancock to turn out of office the members of a police board, whom he accused of malfeasance in office, without any judicial investigation of the matter, General Hancock read him a courteous but emphatic lesson on the proper course for justice to take under a government of law, sending him the following communication:—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF SECRETARY FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Dec. 30, 1867.

HIS EXCELLENCY B. F. FLANDERS, Governor of Louisiana

GOVERNOR,—I am directed by the Major-General Commanding to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 11th inst., with papers and documents accompanying the same, charging the Police Jury, Parish of Orleans, right bank, with appropriating to their own use and benefit the public funds of said parish, and with being personally interested in contracts let by them, and recommending the removal

from office of the president and members of said Police Jury; and, in reply, to state that these charges present a proper case for judicial investigation and determination; and as it is evident to him that the courts of justice can afford adequate relief for the wrongs complained of, if proved to exist, the Major-General Commanding has concluded that it is not advisable to resort to the measures suggested in your excellency's communication.

I am, Governor, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
W. G. Mitchell,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

Then there was the business of registration of voters, with which General Hancock's predecessor had interfered in an arbitrary manner, interpreting the laws after a fashion which gave opportunity for fraud and for oppression that had been turned eagerly to partisan advantage. He promptly revoked the orders, abdicated the autocratic throne assumed by his predecessor, and informed the Board of Registrars that, as they were given full powers in the matter by act of Congress, he should hold them responsible for the proper and exact performance of their duties. In this way he removed another obstacle to local self-government. Following is the order:—

Headquarters Fifth Military District,
New Orleans, La., Jan. 11, 1868.

General Orders No. 3.

Printed "Memoranda of disqualifications for the guidance of the Board of Registrars, under the Military Bill passed March 2, 1867, and the Bill supplementary thereto," and "Questions to be answered by persons proposing to regis-

ter," were distributed from these headquarters in the month of May, 1867, to the members of the Boards of Registration, then in existence in the States of Louisiana and Texas, for the registration of "the male citizens of the United States" who are qualified to vote for delegates under the acts entitled "An act to provide for the more efficient government of the Rebel States."

These "Memoranda" and "Questions" are as follows: —

[The Memoranda, being lengthy, are omitted.]

Grave differences of opinion exist among the best informed and most conscientious citizens of the United States, and the highest functionaries of the National Government, as to the proper construction to be given to the acts of Congress prescribing the qualifications entitling persons to be registered as voters, and to exercise the right of suffrage at the elections to be holden under the act entitled "An act to provide for the more efficient government of the Rebel States" and the acts supplementary thereto. Such differences of opinion are necessary incidents to the imperfection of human language when employed in the work of legislation.

Upon examining those acts, the Commanding General finds himself constrained to dissent from the construction given to them in the "Memoranda" referred to. This construction would of course necessarily exclude all officers holding offices created under *special* acts of the State Legislatures, including all officers of municipal corporations, and of institutions organized for the dispensation of charity, under the authority of such special laws. Such a construction, in the opinion of the Major-General Commanding, has no support in the language of the acts of Congress passed on the 2d and the 23d of March, 1867, which were the only acts in existence when these "Memoranda" were distributed. Since that time, however, what was before, in the opinion of the Commanding General, only an error of construction, would now be a

contravention of the law, as amended and defined in the act of July 19, 1867.

The Major-General Commanding also dissents from various other points in the construction given to the disqualifying clauses of the acts in question, as shown by the "Memoranda" referred to; but he will add nothing further to what he has already said on the subject, because his individual opinions cannot rightfully have, and ought not to have, any influence upon the Boards of Registration in the discharge of the duties expressly imposed upon and intrusted to them by these acts of Congress as they now stand. The Boards of Registration are bodies created by law with certain limited but well-defined judicial powers. It is made their especial duty "to ascertain, upon such facts as they can obtain, whether any person applying is entitled to be registered" under the acts. Their decisions upon the cases of individual applicants are final as to the right, unless appeals are taken, in the proper form, and carried before competent superior authority for revision; and, like the members of ordinary courts engaged in the exercise of judicial functions, it is the bounden duty of the members of the Boards of Registration to decide upon the questions as to the right of any applicant, on the facts before them, and in obedience to the provisions of the law.

Since the passage of the act of July 19, 1867, it is not only the right, but the solemn duty of the members of these Boards, each for himself, and under the sanction of his oath of office, to interpret the provisions of the acts from which the authority of the Boards was derived, and to decide upon each case according to the best of his own judgment.

The distribution of the above "Memoranda" was well calculated to produce the impression in the minds of the members of Boards of Registration, that they constituted rules prescribed to them for their government in the dis-

charge of their official duties which they were required to obey; and it seems certain from various communications of facts in relation to the mode of carrying out the registration, that they were so regarded by the members of the Boards, and that they not only influenced, but in point of fact, controlled the proceedings of the different Boards.

In consequence of this, and as the time for the revision of the registration in the State of Texas is now at hand, and the duty of making the revision will, it is probable, in a great degree be performed by persons who are members of the Boards of Registration, to which the "Memoranda" in question were distributed for their guidance, the Major-General Commanding deems it of importance that the members of the Boards of Registration, and the people at large, should be informed that the "Memoranda" before referred to, distributed from the headquarters of this Military District, are null and of no effect, and are not now to be regarded by the Boards of Registration in making their decisions; and that the members of the Boards are to look to the laws, and to the laws alone, for the rules which are to govern them in the discharge of the delicate and important duties imposed upon them.

For this purpose, they will be furnished with copies of the acts of Congress relating to this subject, and of the amendment (known as Article XIV.) to the Constitution of the United States.

In case of questions arising as to the right of any individual to be registered, the person deeming himself aggrieved is entitled to his appeal from the decision of the Board, and the Boards are directed to make a full statement of the facts in such cases, and to forward the same to these headquarters without unnecessary delay.

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK.

[Official.]

The beneficial effect of these orders was seen at once in the increased respect paid the courts, in the greater steadiness of society and of business, and in the growth of a manly self-reliance among citizens.

CHAPTER VI.

General Hancock and the Carpet-Baggers.— He reads Governor Pease a Lecture on Constitutional Government.— His Refusal to Supplant the Courts by Military Commissions.— He will not Interfere with Civil Suits in the Courts.— Riparian Rights not to be Adjudicated upon by Courts-Martial.— "Arbitrary Power has no Existence here."

THE governors of the Southern States, at this time, were of the sort known as carpet-baggers. They were, of course, intense partisans, and usually men of little or no honest principle. The plunder and ruin of so many Southern States attests the shameful work of these men, who were appointed to place and power for which they were notoriously unfit, as a reward for political service, and who at once proceeded to make the most of their opportunity for enriching themselves. They relied upon the support of the Federal troops in maintaining their control and in shielding them from the consequences of their brigandage. They had no idea of constitutional government, or, if they had, they deliberately and persistently acted in denial of such knowledge. Instead of leading the States which they governed in the path of reconstruction toward a sound popular government, they used every endeavor to perpetuate military rule and to crush the authority of law under the might of arms.

To a statesman like Hancock, such a monstrous

wrong was unendurable. Although not a politician, he knew more of the constitutional history of our country than all of these creatures of party. His studies at West Point had grounded him in the fundamental principles of our system, and as a man he had added to this knowledge the teaching of a wide experience of and acquaintance with the methods of popular government. He knew that in our Republic the people ruled themselves, and he had fought and shed his blood to secure for them the right of self-government. Now he was brought into contact with men in office who demanded that the people should not govern themselves, but should be ruled by officials whom they did not choose, under military coercion; and that this state of things should continue indefinitely.

This perversion of power was most abhorrent to Hancock, who was striving to reinstate the rule of law and to educate a community, demoralized by war, up to the point of local self-government again.

Very naturally, his ideas soon clashed with those of the carpet-bag governors. They looked to him for arbitrary military interference over the head of the law and the courts; he demanded that the law, and not his individual will, should be the ruling power, and insisted that the law should be obeyed.

He very soon came into conflict with Governor Pease of Texas, as we have already stated, on the subject of the appointment of military commissions; and the letter in which he declares his position on this matter is so clear and comprehensive, that we give it herewith:—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF SECRETARY FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Dec. 28, 1867.

His Excellency E. M. PEASE, Governor of Texas:

SIR,— Brevet Maj.-Gen. J. J. Reynolds, commanding District of Texas, in a communication dated Austin, Tex., Nov. 19, 1869, requests that a military commission may be ordered "for the trial of one G. W. Wall and such other prisoners as may be brought before it," and forwards in support of the request, the following papers:

1st. A printed account taken from a newspaper dated Uvalde, Oct. —, 1867 (contained in a letter of James H. Taylor, and in another from Dr. Ansell, U. S. Surgeon at Fort Inge), of the murder of R. W. Black, on the —— day of October, 1867. In this account it is stated Mr. Black was shot through the heart by G. W. Wall "while lying on the counter at Mr. Thomas's store."

2d. A letter of Judge G. H. Noonan to Governor Pease, dated Nov. 10, 1867, informing him that "Wall, Thacker, and Pullian are in confinement in Uvalde County for murder." In this letter it is asked, "Would it not be best to try them by military commission?"

3d. A letter from Governor Pease, dated "Executive of Texas, Austin, Nov. 11, 1867," in which the Governor states that he received a telegram from Judge G. H. Noonan, an extract from which I transmit herewith. In the letter of the Governor the further statement is made that "Uvalde County, where the prisoners are confined, is on the extreme western frontier of the State, and has only about one hundred voters in a territory of about nine hundred square miles," and he then adds, "It is not probable that they (meaning the prisoners) can be kept in confinement long enough ever to be tried by the civil courts of that county;" and expresses the opinion that they never "can be brought to trial unless it is done

before a military commission." And he therefore asks that a military commission be ordered for their trial.

From an examination of the papers submitted to the Commander of the Fifth Military District, it does not appear that there is any indisposition or unwillingness on the part of the local civil tribunals to take jurisdiction of, and to try the prisoners in question; and a suggestion made by the Governor that it is not probable the prisoners can be kept in confinement long enough to be tried by the civil courts (and which is apparently based on the fact that Uvalde County is a frontier county, and does not contain more than a hundred voters), seems to be the only foundation on which the request for the creation of a military commission is based. This, in the opinion of the Commanding General, is not sufficient to justify him in the exercise of the extraordinary power vested in him by law "to organize military commissions or tribunals" for the trial of persons charged with offences against the laws of a State.

It is true that the third section of "An act to provide for the more efficient government of the Rebel States," makes it the duty of the commanders of military districts "to punish, or cause to be punished, all disturbers of the public peace and criminals;" but the same section also declares that "to that end he may allow local civil tribunals to take jurisdiction of, and to try offenders." The further power given to him in the same section, "when in his judgment it may be necessary for the trial of offenders," to organize military commissions for that purpose, is an extraordinary power, and from its very nature should be exercised for the trial of offenders against the laws of a State only in the extraordinary event that the local civil tribunals are unwilling or unable to enforce the laws against crime.

At this time the country is in a state of profound peace. The State Government of Texas, organized in subordination

to the authority of the Government of the United States, is in the full exercise of all its proper powers. The courts, duly empowered to administer the laws, and to punish all offenders against those laws, are in existence. No unwillingness on the part of these courts is suggested to inquire into the offences with which the prisoners in question are charged, nor are any obstructions whatever in the way of enforcing the laws against them said to exist. Under such circumstances there is no good ground for the exercise of the extraordinary power vested in the commander to organize a military commission for the trial of the persons named.

It must be a matter of profound regret to all who value constitutional government, that there should be occasions in times of civil commotion, when the public good imperatively requires the intervention of the military power for the repression of disorders in the body politic, and for the punishment of offences against the existing laws of a country framed for the preservation of social order; but that the intervention of this power should be called for, or even suggested, by civil magistrates, when the laws are no longer silent and civil magistrates are possessed, in their respective spheres, of all the powers necessary to give effect to the laws, excites the surprise of the commander of the Fifth Military District.

In his view it is of evil example, and full of danger to the cause of freedom and good government, that the exercise of the military power, through military tribunals created for the trial of offences against the civil law, should ever be permitted, when the ordinary powers of the existing State Governments are ample for the punishment of offenders, if those charged with the administration of the laws are faithful in the discharge of their duties.

If the means at the disposal of the State authorities are insufficient to secure the confinement of the persons named in the communication of the Governor of the State of Texas to

the General Commanding there, until they can be legally tried, on the fact being made known to him, the Commander of the district will supply the means to retain them in confinement, and the commanding officer of the troops in Texas is so authorized to act. If there are reasons in existence which justify an apprehension that the prisoners cannot be fairly tried in that county, let the proper civil officers have the "venue" changed for the trial, as provided for by the laws of Texas.

In the opinion of the Commander of the Fifth Military District, the existing government of the State of Texas possesses all the powers necessary for the proper and prompt trial of the prisoners in question in due course of law.

If these powers are not exercised for that purpose, the failure to exercise them can be attributed only to the indolence or culpable inefficiency of the officers now charged with the execution and enforcement of the laws under the authority of the State Government; and if there is such a failure, in the instance mentioned, on the part of those officers, to execute the laws, it will then become the duty of the commander to remove the officers who fail to discharge the duties imposed on them, and to replace them with others who will discharge them.

Should these means fail, and it be found, on further experience, that there are not a sufficient number of persons among the people now exercising political power in Texas, to supply the public with officers who will enforce the laws of the State, it will then become necessary for the commander of the Fifth Military District to exercise the powers vested in him by the acts of Congress under which he is appointed, for the purpose of vindicating the majesty of the law. But until such necessity is shown to exist, it is not the intention of the Commanding General to have recourse to those powers; and he deems the present a fitting occasion to make this

known to the Governor of Texas, and through him to the people of the State at large.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
W. G. Mitchell,
Bvt. Lieut-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

So pressing were the requests that he should interterfere with his military authority in matters which belonged strictly to the courts, and in which individual judgment had no place, that General Hancock was compelled, early in his administration, to issue a general order explaining why such interference would not be permitted. The following order was promulgated:—

Headquarters Fifth Military District,
New Orleans, La., Jan. 1, 1868.

General Orders No. 1.

Applications have been made at these headquarters implying the existence of an arbitrary authority in the Commanding General touching purely civil controversies.

One petitioner solicits this action, another that, and each refers to some special consideration of grace or favor which he supposes to exist, and which should influence this Department.

The number of such applications and the waste of time they involve, make it necessary to declare that the administration of civil justice appertains to the regular courts. The rights of litigants do not depend on the views of the general — they are to be adjudged and settled according to the laws. Arbitrary power, such as he has been urged to assume, has no existence here. It is not found in the laws of Louisiana or of Texas — it cannot be derived from any act or acts of Congress — it is restrained by a constitution and prohibited from action in many particulars.

The Major-General Commanding takes occasion to repeat that, while disclaiming judicial functions in civil cases, he can suffer no forcible resistance to the execution of process of the courts.

By command of Major-General Hancock.

[Official.]

To understand what sort of applications compelled the issuance of the above order, it is only necessary to mention that the mayor of New Orleans actually asked the Commanding General to exercise his military authority to stop suits against the city of New Orleans on its corporate notes! The following is General Hancock's reply:—

Headquarters Fifth Military District,
Office of Secretary for Civil Affairs,
New Orleans, La., Dec. 20, 1867.

The Hon. E. Heath, Mayor of New Orleans:

Sir,— In answer to your communication of the 30th ult., requesting his intervention in staying proceedings in suits against the city on its notes, the Major-General Commanding directs me to respectfully submit his views to you on that subject as follows: —

Such a proceeding on his part would, in fact, be a stay-law in favor of the city of New Orleans, which, under the Constitution, could not be enacted by the Legislature of the State; and, in his judgment, such a power ought to be exercised by him, if at all, only in a case of the most urgent necessity.

That the notes referred to were issued originally in violation of the charter of the city, cannot be denied; but the illegal act has since been ratified by the Legislature. The Corporation is therefore bound to pay them; and, even if a defence could be made on technical grounds, it would be dis-

graceful for the city to avail itself of it. Why, then, should the creditors of the city be prevented from resorting to the means given them to enforce the obligation?

In support of your application, you state that the city is unable to pay its debts. This is, unfortunately, the case with most debtors; and on that ground nearly all other debtors would be equally entitled to the same relief.

The Supreme Court of this State has decided that taxes due a municipal corporation cannot be seized, under execution, by a creditor of the corporation, nor is any other property used for municipal purposes liable to seizure. If, therefore, a constable levies an execution on such property, he is a trespasser; and the city has its remedy against him in the proper tribunal.

It does not, therefore, seem to the Major-General Commanding that there is an urgent necessity which would justify his interference in the manner required. Besides, the expediency of such a measure is more than questionable; for, instead of reinstating the confidence of the public in city notes, it would probably destroy it altogether.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. G. Mitchell,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

And if further illustration is necessary to show to what extent this demoralizing policy of military interference had been carried, and how necessary it was to stop it before all respect for the law was destroyed, we present the following letter of General Hancock, which explains in itself the request, and gives the answer:—

Headquarters Fifth Military District,
Office of Secretary for Civil Affairs,
New Orleans, La., Jan. 2, 1868.

Henry Van Vleet, Esq., Chief Engineer:

Sir,—In reply to your communication, requesting the Major-General Commanding to issue a certain order relative

to the New Orleans, Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad Company, I am directed by him to state: —

That the order asked for embraces questions of the most important and delicate nature, such as the exercise of the right of eminent domain, obstruction of navigable rivers or outlets, etc., and it appears to him very questionable whether he ought to deal with questions of that kind; nor is it clear that any benefit could result to the company from such an order.

So far as the State of Louisiana is concerned, there can be no difficulty in obtaining a decree of appropriation of the land which may be required for the enterprise, according to the existing laws, as the company has been regularly incorporated under the general corporation act. Be this, however, as it may, the question of *power*, which the company desires solved by the proposed order, belongs properly to the judiciary, and therefore the Major-General Commanding declines to take action in the matter.

If you desire, the papers in this case, together with a copy of this letter, will be forwarded to the Secretary of War.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
W. G. Mitchell,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

In all the vastly perplexing duties of his civil administration, General Hancock pursued the same calm, unwavering purpose; on whatever side he was assailed with demands for the elevation of the military over the civil power, he consistently and convincingly showed that the civil authority must rule, and the military only support the laws and suppress violent opposition to them.

CHAPTER VII.

Troops at the Polls. — Hancock's Famous Order. — Soldiers to Visit the Polls only to Vote. — Hancock Declines to use his Troops for the Collection of Taxes. — He Instructs Governor Pease in the Art of Law and of Civil Government. — The Usurpations of the Freedmen's Bureau. — Hancock's Letter to General Howard on the Subject.

One of the most humiliating acts of the carpet-bag rulers of the Southern States was the policing of the polls with Federal bayonets at the time of election. It was done under the plea that violence and intimidation were feared. The natural effect, of course, was to inflame the passions of the people and induce violence where none was ever contemplated before. But the most emphatic proof of the insincerity of this plea is found in the fact that the entire civil government, in every department, was in the hands of the men who pretended to fear violence at the polls, and that in all places there was an army of occupation, ready to answer, at a moment's call, the demand for troops to support the police in case of trouble.

It is unnecessary to recite the instances of gross fraud and perversion of the will of the people which occurred under this system. It was impossible that men of the character of those who then held the government should conduct themselves honestly when they held not only the entire civil machinery of elections in their hands, but also controlled an armed force with

which to exclude any or all citizens from the polls at their will. It is easily understood how, with these resources, they permitted none to vote except those who would vote as they wished.

Every occurrence of this sort, of course, increased the bad feeling among the people, and naturally led to violence. It was the direct way in which to breed and foster hatred of the government whose representative was a bayonet, and at the same time to accustom the people to the sight of the degradation of the civil power below that of the military.

One of General Hancock's early acts was to remove this unrepublican idea. He took the constitutional ground that the civil officers of the peace must alone have charge of the duty of preserving order at elections, unless, in the opinion of the civil authorities, violence prevailed to such an extent that it could not be quelled without the aid of the military. As in all his orders, he held that the military arm should be used only to sustain the civil authority, not to supersede it. General Hancock's order on this subject is as follows:—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Dec. 18, 1867.

SPECIAL ORDERS No. 213.

EXTRACT.

I. In compliance with the supplementary act of Congress of March 23, 1867, notice is hereby given that an election will be held in the State of Texas on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth days of February, 1868, to determine whether a convention shall be held, and for delegates thereto, "to form a constitution" for the State under said act.

. . . . . .

IX. Military interference with elections, "unless it shall be necessary to keep the peace at the polls," is prohibited by law; and no soldiers will be allowed to appear at any polling place, unless, as citizens of the State, they are registered as voters, and then only for the purpose of voting; but the commanders of posts will be prepared to act promptly if the civil authorities fail to preserve the peace.

X. The sheriff and other peace officers of each county are required to be present during the whole time the polls are kept open, and until the election is completed, and will be made responsible that there shall be no interference with judges of election, or other interruption of good order.

As an additional measure to secure the purity of the election, each registrar or clerk is hereby clothed, during the election, with authority to call upon the civil officers of the county to make arrests, and, in case of failure of the aforesaid civil officers, are empowered to perform their duties during the election. They will make full report of such failures on the part of civil officers to the Commanding General, Fifth Military District, through the headquarters, District of Texas, for orders in each case.

. . . . . .

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK.
[Official.]

The idea instilled into the minds of those appointed to civil rule in Louisiana and Texas seemed to be that they were to govern by military force. General Hancock was constantly in receipt of requests from the carpet-baggers of various degrees of authority, to undertake by military power the work which, under a proper scheme of government, would rest entirely with the civil arm. It was thus in the matter of troops at

the polls. The Governor wanted the military to take control to the exclusion of the proper civil authorities, because it suited his purpose better. So in the matter of the collection of taxes. Before there had been any attempt to collect the levy, an appeal for force was sent to General Hancock. He replied as follows :—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF SECRETARY FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Jan. 15, 1868.

H. PERALTA, Esq., Auditor of Public Accounts, New Orleans, La.:

SIR,— I am directed by the Major-General Commanding to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., in which you state that the "taxes imposed by the Constitutional Convention cannot be collected through the ordinary process of collecting taxes in this State," and "refer the whole matter to him for his action;" and, in reply, to state that the tax-collectors of the parishes of Orleans and Jefferson, in their report to you of the same date, say that "the tax-payers have generally refused to pay the tax." By reference to the ordinance of the convention, you will find "that the Auditor of Public Accounts of the State shall, as under existing laws in relation to the collection of taxes, superintend and control the collection of said tax of one mill per cent., and shall give immediate notice and instructions to the different sheriffs and tax-collectors."

It does not appear, from your statement, that any process for the collection of this tax has issued, or that any other steps have been taken, except giving notice in the newspapers, and a demand to pay, which has been refused. No resort has been made to those coercive means to enforce the payment of taxes pointed out by the laws of the State; this it is your duty to direct the tax-collector to do. When that is done (and forcible resistance should be made), the Major-

General Commanding will, upon it being reported to him, take prompt measures to vindicate the supremacy of the law.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. G. MITCHELL,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

Even this did not satisfy them, and a subsequent inquiry was made of General Hancock as to what he would do in case the civil courts interfered with the tax-collectors in the discharge of their duties. General Hancock made this reply :—

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF SECRETARY FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Jan. 21, 1878.

Hon. WM. P. MCMILLAN and Hon. M. VIDAL, Special Committee:

GENTLEMEN,—The Major-General Commanding directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th inst., and to state in reply that the second ordinance of the Constitutional Convention, adopted on the 4th of January, 1868, provides a new mode for the collection of the tax, and imposes penalties on defaulting tax-payers.

You request the Commanding General to state what his action would be, should the civil courts of Louisiana interfere with the collectors in the discharge of their duties.

In this connection, the Commanding General deems it unnecessary to repeat what he has already stated in reply to a previous letter concerning his authority on this subject.

It would be highly improper for him to anticipate any illegal interference of the courts in the matter.

Whenever a case arises for the interposition of the powers vested in the Commanding General by the acts of Congress, he will promptly exercise them for the maintenance of law and order.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. G. MITCHELL,
Bvt. Lieut.-Col., U. S. A., Sec'y for Civil Affairs.

General Hancock, although not bred to the law or to politics, was doing a most excellent work in teaching these lawyers and politicians the rudiments as well as the details of civil administration. It can truthfully be said that few governors of States have ever had so many perplexing questions of law and of jurisdiction placed before them for decision as General Hancock was assailed with when he was given absolute power, for good or for evil, in the carpet-bag-ridden States of Louisiana and Texas. And in deciding these cases he showed a clearness of mind and a genius for administration which entitle him to a high place among executive officers. If he was not born a statesman, he certainly developed into one.

The contrast between Hancock and the general whom he was sent to supersede on the critical first day of the Gettysburg fight is clearly shown by the incidents which occurred about this time. General Howard was at the head of the Freedmen's Bureau; and, as this Bureau was run almost exclusively as a party machine, there was inevitable conflict between its operations and the purposes of a commander who was acting for his country and not for party. Some friction having occurred in General Hancock's department, he addressed a letter to General Howard on the subject, which is given here for the reason that in it Hancock again states certain vital principles which it would have been well to inculcate in the minds of all district commanders at that time.

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., Feb. 24, 1868.

Major-General O. O. HOWARD, Commissioner of Bureau Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Washington D. C.:

GENERAL,—Referring to the report of Captain E. Collins, Seventeenth Infantry, sub-assistant commissioner of the Bureau refugees, freedmen, and abandoned lands, at Brenham, Tex., dated Dec. 31, 1867, and transmitted by you for my information, I have the honor to state that I do not understand how any orders of mine can be interpreted as interfering with the proper execution of the law creating the Bureau. It is certainly not my intention that they should so interfere. Anything complained of in that letter, which could have lawfully been remedied by the exercise of military authority, should have received the action of General Reynolds, who, being military commander, and also Assistant Commissioner for Texas, was the proper authority to apply the remedy, and to that end was vested with the necessary power.

A copy of the report of Captain Collins had already been forwarded to me by General Reynolds before the receipt of your communication, and returned to him January 16th, with the following indorsement: "Respectfully returned Brevet Maj.-Gen. J. J. Reynolds, commanding District of Texas. This paper seems to contain only vague and indefinite complaints, without specific action as to any particular cases. If Captain Collins has any special cases of the nature referred to in his communication, which require action at these headquarters, he can transmit them, and they will receive attention."

No reply has been received to this; a proof either of the non-existence of such special cases, or of neglect of duty on the part of Captain Collins in not reporting them. It is, and will be my pleasure as well as duty, to aid you and the officers and agents under your direction, in the proper execution

of the law. I have just returned from a trip to Texas. Whilst there I passed through Brenham twice, and saw Captain Collins; but neither from him nor from General Reynolds, did I hear anything in regard to this subject, so far as I recollect.

There are numerous abuses of authority on the part of certain agents of the Bureau in Texas, and General Reynolds is already investigating some of them.

My intention is to confine the agents of the Bureau within their legitimate authority, so far as my power as district commander extends; further than that, it is not my intention or desire to interfere with the Freedmen's Bureau. I can say, however, that had the district commander a superior control over the freedmen's affairs in the district, the Bureau would be as useful, and would work more harmoniously, and be more in favor with the people. At present there is a clashing of authority. I simply mention the facts without desiring any such control.

The Reconstruction Acts charge district commanders with the duty of protecting all persons in their rights of person and property; and to this end authorize them to allow local civil tribunals to take jurisdiction of, and try offenders; or if in their opinion necessary, to organize a military commission or tribunals for that purpose.

They are thus given control over all criminal proceedings for violation of the statute laws of the States, and for such other offences as are not by law made triable by the United States courts. The Reconstruction Acts exempt no class of persons from their operation, and the duty of protecting *all* persons in their rights of person and property, of necessity invests district commanders with control over the agents of the Bureau, to the extent of at least enabling them to restrain these agents from any interference with, or disregard of their prerogatives as district commanders.

The district commanders are made responsible for the preservation of peace and the enforcement of the local laws within their districts; and they are the ones required to designate the tribunals before which those who break the peace and violate these laws shall be tried.

Such being the fact, many of the agents of the Bureau seem not to be aware of it. In Texas, some are yet holding courts, trying cases, imposing fines, taking fees for services, and arresting citizens for offences over which the Bureau is not intended by law to have jurisdiction.

General Reynolds is aware of some of these cases, and is, as I have already mentioned, giving his attention to them.

In Louisiana, this state of affairs exists to a less extent, if at all.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. Hancock,

Major-General U. S. Army Commanding.

Howard, it will be observed, had been eager in usurping authority which did not belong to his agents; Hancock had, from the first, refused to assume the authority vested in him at his discretion, whenever the civil government could perform the duty. The difference is that between a government by the people, under laws of their own enactment, and a government of centralized force, acting through agents irresponsible to the people. General Hancock now represents the same idea in the Presidential contest that he represented in 1868 as commander of the Fifth Military District.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Carpet-Baggers protest against Civil Government.— Governor Pease's Open Letter.— General Hancock's Reply.— The Soldier defends the Constitution and the Rights of the People against the Lawyer. — Congress attempts to get rid of Hancock.— A Bill which They dared not pass.— Grant made the Instrument of the Radicals. — He supersedes the President and revokes Hancock's Orders. — Hancock's Resignation.

It was quite natural that the carpet-bag governors of Louisiana and Texas should dislike General Hancock's system. It deprived them of the arbitrary power which they had been accustomed to wield, and gave the people a chance to govern themselves in a quiet and decent way under the law. They saw their consequence and their opportunities for profit falling away from them, and they realized that, with returning prosperity, peace, and contentment, their occupation as governors would be gone. Hence they rebelled against Hancock's declaration that "the right of trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, the natural rights of persons, and the rights of property should be preserved."

Governor Pease of Texas was especially worried about the reign of law which General Hancock had introduced. This Pease had been appointed to his place under military rule, and he had himself ruled with recklessness and cruelty. Shortly after he came into office, all of the judges of the Supreme Court of Texas,

five in number, and twelve out of seventeen of the district judges, were arbitrarily removed from office; and others, whom this functionary desired, were appointed in their places. In addition to this, the county officers in seventy-five out of the one hundred and twenty-eight counties were removed, and others appointed in their places. By arbitrary order, none but persons capable of taking the test oath, and registered as such, were allowed to serve as jurors.

No people but one defeated and exhausted by a long and bloody war, would have endured such outrages. Such arbitrary acts, of themselves, would have been sufficient, under ordinary circumstances, to have deluged any State in blood. But the oppressed ex-rebels proudly endured the wrong in silence.

This wrong, General Hancock, as soon as he took command, aimed to repair; and his first step in this direction was the promulgation of the famous "General Order No. 40." To this order Governor Pease took exception, and sent to the press an open letter addressed to General Hancock, in which he criticised with great severity the action of the latter in issuing the order.

He cited the act of Congress providing "for the more efficient government of the Southern States," which made the government of Texas provisional, and, as a part of the Fifth Military District, subject to military law. He affirmed that the President had put Hancock in command of a military force to protect the rights of property and person, suppress insurrection and violence, and to punish offenders either by military commissions or by the local civil tribunals, as his judg-

ment might seem best. He declared further that there were practically no local civil tribunals; that it was not true, as was alleged in "Order No. 40," that there was no longer any organized resistance to the authority of the United States, but that, on the contrary, a large majority of the white population who participated in the late rebellion were embittered against the government, yielding only an unwilling obedience, having no affection, and but little respect, for the government. He declared that the people of Texas regarded the reconstruction legislation of Congress as unconstitutional, the provisional government a usurpation, and the emancipation of their slaves and their own disfranchisement as insult and oppression. For this and similar reasons, Governor Pease demanded that General Hancock set aside the local tribunals, and enforce penalties by military commissions.

Here the spectacle was presented to the world of a civil executive demanding that military rule shall be established above the law of the land, and arguing the case against an old soldier who had staked even his military position on the issue that the law of the land shall prevail over the power which he himself wielded.

But the soldier lost no time in repulsing this civilian assault upon his works. Governor Pease had given his letter to the press, for political effect at the North, long before he sent it to General Hancock; but the latter replied at once on receipt of the missive, and with vigor.

He pointed out the option given him by the Reconstruction Act, to govern by the local civil tribunals, if

in his judgment he thought best. The act, therefore, recognized those local civil tribunals as legal authorities for the purpose specified.

He showed that such matters as the affection or respect or hatred of the people, so long as not developed into violation of law, were matters beyond the power of human tribunals, and that freedom of thought and speech, though acrimonious, was consistent with human welfare. What the people of Texas thought of the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of acts of Congress, had nothing to do with the manner in which they should be ruled.

He declared that, at the expiration of two years after the close of the war, it was time to remember that it was proposed that the American people should be freemen and that it was time to tolerate free popular discussion, and to extend forbearance and consideration to opposing views.

He showed that to deny a profound state of peace in Texas necessitated a like denial in regard to any State in the Union where differences of opinion exist between majorities and minorities, and that, if difficulties in enforcing criminal laws in Texas authorized the setting aside of the local tribunals and the setting up of arbitrary military commissions, they would warrant them in every State of the Union, where it is true that sheriffs fail often to arrest, where grand jurors will not always indict, where petit juries have acquitted persons who were guilty, and where prisoners charged with offences have broken jail and escaped. Such reasons for establishing military commissions would

wipe civil government and law and liberty from the face of the earth.

He showed with clearness that if he set aside the laws enacted for the people of the States lately in rebellion, which laws were not in conflict with the Constitution and acts of Congress, there would no longer exist any rights of person and property; and he demonstrated the absurdity of a military commission to establish wills, deeds, successions, or to settle any of the thousand questions which arise between men, for the solution of which laws and courts were established, and for dealing with which military commissions were utterly incapable.

He finally showed from the statistics that neither crime nor disloyal offences were on the increase under the operation of "Order No. 40," but that the contrary was expressly true.

But no synopsis can do justice to this letter, which is not only admirable as an exposition of the constitutional rights of citizens, but is a model of elegant and forcible composition. The mental strength of the writer is shown in every line. Following is the letter in full: —

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT,
NEW ORLEANS, LA., March 9, 1868.

To His Excellency E. M. PEASE, Governor of Texas:

SIR,—Your communication of the 17th January last, was received in due course of mail (the 27th January), but not until it had been widely circulated by the newspaper press. To such a letter—written and published for manifest purposes—it has been my intention to reply as soon as leisure from more important business would permit.

Your statement that the act of Congress "to provide for the more efficient government of the rebel States" declares that whatever government existed in Texas was provisional; that peace and order should be enforced; that Texas should be part of the Fifth Military District, and subject to military power; that the President should appoint an officer to command in said district, and detail a force to protect the rights of person and property, suppress insurrection and violence, and punish offenders, either by military commission or through the action of local civil tribunals, as in his judgment might seem best, will not be disputed. One need only read the act to perceive it contain such provisions. But how all this is supposed to have made it my duty to order the military commission requested, you have entirely failed to show. The power to do a thing, if shown, and the propriety of doing it, are often very different matters. You observe you are at a loss to understand how a government, without representation in Congress or a militia force, and subject to military power, can be said to be in the full exercise of all its proper powers. You do not reflect that this government, created or permitted by Congress has all the powers which the act intends, and may fully exercise them accordingly. If you think it ought to have more powers, should be allowed to send members to Congress, wield a militia force, and possess yet other powers, your complaint is not to be preferred against me, but against Congress, who made it what it is.

As respects the issue between us, any question as to what Congress ought to have done has no pertinence. You admit the act of Congress authorizes me to try an offender by military commission, or allow the local civil tribunals to try, as I shall deem best; and you cannot deny the act expressly recognizes such local civil tribunals as legal authorities for the purpose specified. When you contend there are no legal local tribunals for any purpose in Texas, you must either

deny the plain reading of the act of Congress or the power of Congress to pass the act.

You next remark that you dissent from my declaration, "that the country (Texas) is in a state of profound peace," and proceed to state the grounds of your dissent. They appear to me not a little extraordinary. I quote your words: "It is true there no longer exists here (Texas) any organized resistance to the authority of the United States." "But a large majority of the white population who participated in the late rebellion are embittered against the government, and yield to it an unwilling obedience." Nevertheless, you concede they do yield it obedience. You proceed:

"None of this class have any affection for the government, and very few any respect for it. They regard the legislation of Congress on the subject of reconstruction as unconstitutional and hostile to their interests, and consider the government now existing here under authority of the United States as a usurpation on their rights. They look on the emancipation of their late slaves and the disfranchisement of a portion of their own class as an act of insult and oppression."

And this is all you have to present for proof that war and not peace prevails in Texas; and hence it becomes my duty —so you suppose—to set aside the local civil tribunals, and enforce the penal code against citizens by means of military commissions.

My dear sir, I am not a lawyer, nor has it been my business, as it may have been yours, to study the philosophy of statecraft and politics. But I may lay claim, after an experience of more than half a lifetime, to some poor knowledge of men, and some appreciation of what is necessary to social order and happiness. And for the future of our common country, I could devoutly wish that no great number of our people have yet fallen in with the views you appear to entertain. Woe be to us whenever it shall come to pass that the power

of the magistrate—civil or military—is permitted to deal with the mere opinions or feelings of the people.

I have been accustomed to believe that sentiments of respect or disrespect, and feelings of affection, love, or hatred, so long as not developed into acts in violation of law, were matters wholly beyond the punitory power of human tribunals.

I will maintain that the entire freedom of thought and speech, however acrimoniously indulged, is consistent with the noblest aspirations of man, and the happiest condition of his race.

When a boy, I remember to have read a speech of Lord Chatham, delivered in Parliament. It was during our Revolutionary war, and related to the policy of employing savages on the side of Britain. You may be more familiar with the speech than I am. If I am not greatly mistaken, his lordship denounced the British Government—his government—in terms of unmeasured bitterness. He characterized its policy as revolting to every sentiment of humanity and religion; proclaimed it covered with disgrace, and vented his eternal abhorrence of it and its measures. It may, I think, be safely asserted that a majority of the British nation concurred in the views of Lord Chatham. But whoever supposed that profound peace was not existing in that kingdom, or that government had any authority to question the absolute right of the opposition to express their objections to the propriety of the king's measures in any words or to any extent they pleased? It would be difficult to show that the opponents of the government in the days of the elder Adams, or Jefferson, or Jackson, exhibited for it either "affection" or "respect." Your are conversant with the history of our past parties and political struggles touching legislation on alienage, sedition, the embargo, national banks, our wars with England and Mexico, and cannot be ignorant of the fact, that for one

party to assert that a law or system of legislation is unconstitutional, oppressive, and usurpative, is not a new thing in the United States. That the people of Texas consider acts of Congress unconstitutional, oppressive, or insulting to them, is of no consequence to the matter in hand. The President of the United States has announced his opinion that these acts of Congress are unconstitutional. The Supreme Court, as you are aware, not long ago decided unanimously that a certain military commission was unconstitutional. Our people everywhere, in every State, without reference to the side they took during the Rebellion, differ as to the constitutionality of these acts of Congress. How the matter really is, neither you nor I may dogmatically affirm.

If you deem them constitutional laws, and beneficial to the country, you not only have the right to publish your opinions, but it might be your bounden duty as a citizen to do so. Not less is it the privilege and duty of any and every citizen, wherever residing, to publish his opinion freely and fearlessly on this and every question which he thinks concerns his interest. This is merely in accordance with the principles of our free government; and neither you nor I would wish to live under any other. It is time now, at the end of almost two years from the close of the war, we should begin to recollect what manner of people we are; to tolerate again free, popular discussion, and extend some forbearance and consideration to opposing views. The maxims that in all intellectual contests truth is mighty and must prevail, and that error is harmless when reason is left free to combat it, are not only sound, but salutary. It is a poor compliment to the merits of such a cause, that its advocates would silence opposition by force; and generally those only who are in the wrong will resort to this ungenerous means. I am confident you will not commit your serious judgment to the proposition that any amount of discussion, or any sort of opinions, how-

ever unwise in your judgment, or any assertion of feeling, however resentful or bitter, not resulting in a breach of law, can furnish justification for your denial that profound peace exists in Texas. You might as well deny that profound peace exists in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, California, Ohio and Kentucky, where a majority of people differ with a minority on these questions; or that profound peace exists in the House of Representatives or the Senate at Washington, or in the Supreme Court, where all these questions have been repeatedly discussed, and parties respectfully and patiently heard. You next complain that in parts of the State (Texas) it is difficult to enforce the criminal laws; that sheriffs fail to arrest; that grand jurors will not always indict; that in some cases the military, acting in aid of the civil authorities, have not been able to execute the process of the courts; that petit jurors have acquitted persons adjudged guilty by you; and that other persons charged with offences have broke jail and fled from prosecution. I know not how these things are; but admitting your representations literally true, if for such reasons I should set aside the local civil tribunals and order a military commission, there is no place in the United States where it might not be done with equal propriety. There is not a State in the Union—North or South—where the like facts are not continually happening. Perfection is not to be predicated of man or his works. No one can reasonably expect certain and absolute justice in human transactions; and if military power is to be set in motion, on the principles for which you would seem to contend, I fear that a civil government, regulated by laws, could have no abiding place beneath the circuit of the sun. It is rather more than hinted in your letter, that there is no local State government in Texas, and no local laws outside of the acts of Congress, which I ought to respect; and that I should undertake to protect the rights of persons and property in *my own way* and in an *arbitrary manner*. If such

be your meaning, I am compelled to differ with you. After the abolition of slavery (an event which I hope no one now regrets), the laws of Louisiana and Texas existing prior to the rebellion, and not in conflict with the acts of Congress, comprised a vast system of jurisprudence, both civil and criminal. It required not volumes only, but libraries to contain them. They laid down principles and precedents for ascertaining the rights and adjusting the controversies of men in every conceivable case. They were the creations of great and good and learned men, who had labored in their day for their kind, and gone down to the grave long before our recent troubles, leaving their works an inestimable legacy to the human race. These laws, as I am informed, connected the civilization of past and present ages, and testified of the justice, wisdom, humanity, and patriotism of more than one nation, through whose records they descended to the present people of these States. I am satisfied, from representations of persons competent to judge, they are as perfect a system of laws as may be found elsewhere, and better suited than any other to the condition of this people, for by them they have long been governed. Why should it be supposed that Congress has abolished these laws? Why should any one wish to abolish them? They have committed no treason, nor are hostile to the United States, nor countenance crime, nor favor injustice. On them, as on a foundation of rock, reposes almost the entire superstructure of social order in these two States. Annul this code of local laws, and there would be no longer any rights, either of person or property, here. Abolish the local civil tribunals made to execute them, and you would virtually annul the laws, except in reference to the very few cases cognizable in the Federal courts. Let us for a moment suppose the whole local civil code annulled, and that I am left, as commander of the Fifth Military District, the sole fountain of law and justice. This is the position in which you would place me.

I am now to protect all rights and redress all wrongs. How is it possible for me to do it? Innumerable questions arise, of which I am not only ignorant, but to the solution of which a military court is entirely unfitted. One would establish a will, another a deed; or the question is one of succession, or partnership, or descent, or trust; a suit of ejectment or claim to chattels; or the application may relate to robbery, theft, arson, or murder. How am I to take the first step in any such matter? If I turn to the acts of Congress I find nothing on the subject. I dare not open the authors on the local code, for it has ceased to exist.

And you tell me that in this perplexing condition I am to furnish, by dint of my own hasty and crude judgment, the legislation demanded by the vast and manifold interests of the people! I repeat, sir, that you, and not Congress, are responsible for the monstrous suggestion that there are no local laws or institutions here to be respected by me, outside the acts of Congress. I say unhesitatingly, if it were possible that Congress should pass an act abolishing the local codes for Louisiana and Texas—which I do not believe—and it should fall to my lot to supply their places with something of my own, I do not see how I could do better than follow the laws in force here prior to the Rebellion, excepting whatever therein shall relate to slavery. Power may destroy the forms, but not the principles of justice; these will live in spite even of the sword. History tells us that the Roman pandects were lost for a long period among the rubbish that war and revolution had heaped upon them; but at length were dug out of the ruins, again to be regarded as a precious treasure.

You are pleased to state that "since the publication of (my) general orders No. 40, there has been a perceptible increase of crime and manifestations of hostile feeling toward the Government and its supporters," and add that it is "an

unpleasant duty to give such a recital of the condition of the country."

You will permit me to say that I deem it impossible the first of these statements can be true, and that I do very greatly doubt the correctness of the second. General orders No. 40 was issued at New Orleans, Nov. 29, 1867, and your letter was dated Jan. 17, 1868. Allowing time for order No. 40 to reach Texas and become generally known, some additional time must have elapsed before its effect would be manifested, and yet a further time must transpire before you would be able to collect the evidence of what you term "the condition of the country;" and yet, after all this, you would have to make the necessary investigations to ascertain if order No. 40, or something else, was the cause. The time, therefore, remaining to enable you, before the 17th of January, 1868, to reach a satisfactory conclusion on so delicate and nice a question must have been very short. How you proceeded; whether you investigated yourself or through third persons; and if so, who they were, what their competency and fairness; on what evidence you rested your conclusion, or whether you ascertained any facts at all, are points upon which your letter so discreetly omits all mention, that I may well be excused for not relying implicitly upon it; nor is my difficulty diminished by the fact that in another part of your letter you state that ever since the close of the war a very large portion of the people have had no affection for the Government, but bitterness of feeling only. Had the duty of publishing and circulating through the country, long before it reached me, your statement that the action of the district commander was increasing crime and hostile feeling against the Government, been less painful to your sensibilities, it might possibly have occurred to you to furnish something on the subject in addition to your bare assertion.

But what was order No. 40, and how could it have the

effect you attribute to it? It sets forth that "the great principles of American liberty are still the inheritance of this people and ever should be; that the right of trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, and the natural rights of persons and property must be preserved." Will you question the truth of these declarations? Which one of these great principles of liberty are you ready to deny and repudiate? Whoever does so avows himself the enemy of human liberty and the advocate of despotism. Was there any intimation in general orders No. 40 that any crimes or breaches of law would be countenanced? You know that there was not. On the contrary, you know perfectly well that while "the consideration of crime and offences committed in the Fifth Military District was referred to the judgment of the regular civil tribunals," a pledge was given in order No. 40, which all understood, that tribunals would be supported in their lawful jurisdiction, and that "forcible resistance to law would be instantly suppressed by arms." You will not affirm that this pledge has ever been forfeited. There has not been a moment since I have been in command of the Fifth District, when the whole military force in my hands has not been ready to support the civil authorities of Texas in the execution of the laws. And I am unwilling to believe they would refuse to call for aid if they needed it.

There are some considerations which, it seems to me, should cause you to hesitate before indulging in wholesale censures against the civil authorities of Texas. You are yourself the chief of these authorities; not elected by the people, but created by the military. Not long after you had thus come into office, all the judges of the Supreme Court of Texas—five in number—were removed from office, and new appointments made; twelve of the seventeen district judges were removed and others appointed. County officers, more

or less, in seventy-five out of one hundred and twenty-eight counties, were removed, and others appointed in their places. It is fair to conclude that the executive and judicial civil functionaries in Texas are the persons whom you desired to fill the offices. It is proper to mention, also, that none but registered citizens, and only those who could take the test oath, have been allowed to serve as jurors during your administration. Now, it is against the local government, created by military power prior to my coming here, and so composed of your personal and political friends, that you have preferred the most grievous complaints. It is of them that you have asserted they will not do their duty; they will not maintain justice; will not arrest offenders; will not punish crimes; and that out of one hundred homicides committed in the last twelve months, not over ten arrests have been made; and by means of such gross disregard of duty, you declare that neither property nor life is safe in Texas.

Certainly you could have said nothing more to the discredit of the officials who are now in office. If the facts be as you allege, a mystery is presented for which I can imagine no explanation. Why is it that your political friends, backed up and sustained by the whole military of the United States in this district, should be unwilling to enforce the laws against that part of the population lately in rebellion, and whom you represent as the offenders? In all the history of these troubles, I have never seen or heard before of such a fact. I repeat, if the fact be so, it is a profound mystery, utterly surpassing my comprehension. I am constrained to declare that I believe you are in very great error as to facts. On careful examination at the proper source, I find that, at the date of your letter, four cases only of homicides had been reported to these headquarters as having occurred since Nov. 29, 1867, the date of order 40, and these cases were ordered to be tried or investigated as soon as the reports were received.

However, the fact of one hundred homicides may still be correct, as stated by you. The Freedmen's Bureau in Texas reported one hundred and sixty; how many of these were by Indians and Mexicans, and how the remainder were classified, is not known, nor is it known whether these data are accurate.

The report of the commanding officer of the District of Texas shows that since I assumed command no applications have been made to him by you for the arrest of criminals in the State of Texas.

To this date eighteen cases of homicides have been reported to me as having occurred since Nov. 29, 1867, although special instructions had been given to report such cases as they occur. Of these, five were committed by Indians, one by a Mexican, one by an insane man, three by colored men, two of women by their husbands, and of the remainder, some by parties unknown — all of which could be scarcely attributable to order No. 40. If the reports received since the issuing of order No. 40 are correct, they exhibit no increase of homicides in my time, if you are correct that one hundred had occurred in the past twelve months.

That there has not been a perfect administration of justice in Texas I am not prepared to deny.

That there has been no such wanton disregard of duty on the part of officials as you allege, I am well satisfied. A very little while ago you regarded the present officials in Texas the only ones who could be safely trusted with power. Now you pronounce them worthless, and would cast them aside.

I have found little else in your letter but indications of temper, lashed into excitement by causes which I deem mostly imaginary, a great confidence in the accuracy of your own opinions, and an intolerance of the opinions of others, a desire to punish the thoughts and feelings of those who

differ from you, and an impatience which magnifies the shortcomings of officials who are perhaps as earnest and conscientious in the discharge of their duties as yourself, and a most unsound conclusion that while any persons are to be found wanting in affection or respect for government, or yielding it obedience from motives which you do not approve, war, and not peace, is the status, and all such persons are the proper subjects for military penal jurisdiction.

If I have written anything to disabuse your mind of so grave an error, I shall be gratified.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. Hancock,
Major-General Commanding.

But all this time General Hancock's action was interfering, not only with the greedy carpet-baggers, who were fattening upon the Southern States, but with the schemes of the Radical majority in Congress. A Presidential election was approaching, and it was no part of their plan to permit the South to acquire such a degree of rehabilitation as to have the vote of its people counted in determining the result. To elect their candidate and retain possession of Congress it was necessary that the South should remain under military rule, that its citizens should be under the ban of disfranchisement, and that Federal troops should fence in the polls.

To allow Hancock's plan of constitutional and legal government to be carried out, would bring the South peaceably and happily back into the Union before the ambition of these politicians could be realized. Hence it was decreed that Hancock must go. The President

had appointed him and the President alone could remove him. So it must be accomplished by indirection. The first plan was to pass a bill reducing the number of major-generals in the regular army — Hancock having received that rank in 1866 — and turn him out in that way. A bill was introduced to this effect; but the prospect of a tremendous popular reaction against its authors terrified them, and it was dropped.

A quieter scheme was then concocted. General Grant was by this time thoroughly imbued with the Presidential ambition, and with the assurance of the Republican nomination he readily lent himself to the plans of the leaders of that party. The first step was, by act of Congress, to place in the hands of the General of the army unusual powers, exceeding those of the President, in regard to the administration of the military governments of the South. The next was for the General to use these powers in interference with General Hancock's direction of affairs in his district in such a manner as to cripple his authority and, in fact, place him in a humiliating position.

About this time General Hancock wrote to a friend in Congress: "I hope to be relieved here soon. The President is no longer able to protect me. So that I may expect one humiliation after another until I am forced to resign. I am prepared for any event. Nothing can intimidate me from doing what I believe to be honest and right."

General Hancock applied to be relieved from his command on the 27th of February, 1868; and the

South was given over to the bayonet, to plunder, and to strife. But the record of that six months' constitutional rule in the midst of military despotism on every hand had placed Hancock's name high on the roll of Democratic statesmen.

CHAPTER IX.

Hancock's Consistent and Patriotic Democracy.— His California Speech in 1861.— His Acts in 1868.— Intimacy with President Lincoln.— The Democratic Convention of 1868.— Hancock the Leading Candidate.— His Letter Endorsing the Nomination of Seymour.— The Convention of 1876.— He Again Receives a Large Vote.— Tributes to His Character.

It is pleasing to note with what consistent patriotism General Hancock performed his duties to his country. With him the Democratic sentiment was not a flickering flame, blown hither and thither with every breath of circumstance or interest. It was a steady light, illumining his path at every step, and making it impossible for him to go astray.

In every situation we find him the same loyal, determined champion of the rights of a free people under a free government. Thus, when he was captain and quartermaster at Los Angeles, at the outbreak of the war, before the news of actual secession had reached that distant point, he declared himself promptly and unflinchingly on the side of the Union; and in a speech made on the 4th of July, 1861, he said: —

"Who of us can forget the names of Lexington, of Monmouth, of Brandywine and Yorktown, and who can regret that he is a descendant of those who fought there for the liberties we now enjoy? And what flag is it that we now look to as the banner that carried us through the great contest, and was honored by the gallant deeds of its defenders?

The star-spangled banner of America, then embracing thirteen pale stars, representing that number of oppressed colonies. Now, thirty-four bright planets, representing that number of great States. To be sure, clouds intervene between us and eleven of that number, but we will trust that those clouds may soon be dispelled, and that those great stars in the southern constellation may shine forth again with even greater splendor than before.

"Let us believe, at least let us trust, that our brothers there do not wish to separate themselves permanently from the common memories which have so long bound us together, but that when reason returns and resumes her sway they will prefer the brighter page of history which our mutual deeds have inscribed upon the tablets of time, to that of the uncertain future of a new confederation, which, alas! to them may prove illusory and unsatisfactory.

"Let them return to us. We will welcome them as brothers who have been estranged, but have come back. We have an interest in the battle-fields of the Revolution in those States, not second to their own. Our forefathers fought there side by side with theirs. Can they, if they would, throw aside their rights to the memories of the great fields on our soil on which their ancestors won renown? No, they cannot! God forbid that they should desire it. To those who, regardless of these sacred memories, insist on sundering this union of States, let us who only wish our birthrights preserved to us, and whose desire it is to be still citizens of this great country that gave us birth, and to live under the flag which has gained for us the glory we boast of, say this day, to those among us who feel aggrieved: Your rights we will respect; your wrongs we will assist you to redress; but the government resulting from the union of these States is a priceless heritage that we intend to preserve and defend to the last extremity."

And when, seven years later, after he had proved the sincerity of his words by service for free government on the bloodiest fields of the war, he was called to responsible administrative duties, he also proved his belief in a government of and by the people. He was a Unionist in the truest and best sense of the word, because he was a true Democrat.

So, too, during his service in Washington at the beginning of his career, Abraham Lincoln found in the young Brigadier-General of volunteers a strong and congenial soul, filled with the sincerest patriotism and enthusiasm for the Union. He was frequently sent for by the President for consultation and for an interchange of views; for the key-note of Lincoln's policy was the same idea which moved General Hancock in his course during and after the war. It was that the Union must be preserved; first, by putting down armed rebellion at any cost; secondly, by restoring the reign of law and establishing again free popular government in the South. Hancock was only carrying out the wise and patriotic policy of the martyred President in his administration in Louisiana and Texas when those who had opposed Lincoln turned their opposition also against the general who had been Lincoln's friend.

It was such absolute confidence in General Hancock's loyalty to the ideas on which our constitutional government is based, that led the Democracy of the country to look to him as the proper leader of the party in the Presidential contest of 1868. He, of all the major-generals in the army, had shown a strength of principle sufficiently stalwart to maintain the rights of the people

against the encroachments of the Radical majority in Congress. He alone had the moral courage to refuse the gift of absolute power given him by act of Congress, and to subordinate the military arm to civil authority. He was, in fact, the foremost representative of the idea of constitutional government, and many thought that to his hands should be entrusted the Democratic banner in the election which was then approaching.

The convention met in New York city, July 4, 1868, Governor Seymour presiding. The organization occupied two days, and upon the third day, July 7, the States were first called for the presentation of candidates. When Maine was reached on the list, Gen. Samuel J. Anderson presented the name of General Hancock in the following speech : —

I am directed by the majority of the delegates from Maine to present to this body as a candidate, a gentleman who, they believe, unites in himself all the best characteristics of the most available candidates, and who, if elected, would be able to discharge acceptably, and as well as any other man in the country, the duties of the chief executive office of the United States. I present a gentleman who, by his position during the past year, has made a record that stands to-day high in the hearts of the whole American people ; a gentleman who, appointed to a Military District of the United States,—succeeding one who in that position had subordinated his regard for the laws and the Constitution of the country, and his respect for the Chief Magistrate of the United States, to his own ambitious longings for wealth and power,—standing there as the representative of his Government, interposed the shield of the laws of the country between the tyranny of hard and petty tyrants and an op-

pressed and outraged people; a man who, by nature gifted with a broad, comprehensive, and discriminating intellect, educated in a school which taught him that the government was instituted to afford to its citizens the great cardinal rights of personal liberty, personal security, and the right to acquire and enjoy property, stood there and interposed between the operations of the military government and the people who had been outraged and oppressed, the law that should accord to them those rights; a gentleman who, on another field, was one of the brave men in command of troops in the late contest, and united within himself the attributes of lion-hearted courage and great magnanimity; who fought well for the nation which placed him in command, but held forth the hand of mercy to the enemy when brought beneath his arms; a man who, ever foremost in the fight, held the plume aloft, which, like the helmet of Navarre, was always the oriflamme under which his troops went on either to honorable death or glorious victory. With these words it would seem almost superfluous to give the name; but I will nominate Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock.

General Hancock's nomination was received with great cheers, and the balloting began. On the first ballot Pendleton led with 105 votes (each delegate casting half a vote), and Hancock stood next on the list with $33\frac{1}{2}$. It was a long and weary balloting, extending into the following day with the relative position of the leading candidates but little changed. On the fifteenth ballot, however, the chairman of the Pennsylvania delegation announced that, having voted up to that time for Hon. Asa Packer, the vote of the State would then be thrown for General Hancock. From that point onward General Hancock stood at the

head of the poll, on the eighteenth ballot receiving 144½ votes, or nearly a majority.

It was at length proved to the satisfaction of all the delegates that the necessary two-thirds vote could not be secured for any candidate then before the Convention, and on the twenty-second ballot ex-Governor Seymour was nominated.

It is interesting to observe that, in this Convention, eleven of the twelve votes of Massachusetts were steadily cast for General Hancock, from the first ballot to the end of the contest; and further, that the Massachusetts delegation was, as in 1880, headed by Judge J. G. Abbott, and was largely composed of the same men who, in 1880, supported him in the Cincinnati Convention for a successful nomination.

The opposition at this time took occasion to represent General Hancock as disaffected by the result of the Convention, and to claim that he would not cordially support the candidate of the constitutional party. Little did they know the man. Little did they understand how firm was the foundation of principle on which he based his conduct. But, in consequence of these misrepresentations, Mr. Glover addressed him a letter of inquiry, as follows:—

St. Louis, July 13, 1868.

Major-General Hancock:

Dear Sir,—I deem it proper to direct your attention to statements made by the Radical press, to the effect that you are greatly dissatisfied with the results of the National Democratic Convention. The object of these statements is to create an impression that you do not acquiesce in the

judgment of the Convention, and that your friends do not; and that, in consequence, Seymour and Blair will not have their cordial support. I wish you to know, General, that I have taken the liberty to pronounce these statements false, and to assure those who have spoken with me on the subject, that nothing could cause you more regret than to find your friends, or any of them, less earnest in supporting the ticket which has been nominated than they would have been had your name stood in the place of Mr. Seymour's.

I am, sir, sincerely, your friend,

S. T. Glover.

To this General Hancock replied in a manly letter which shows the character of this true representative of loyal Democracy:—

Newport, R. I., July 17, 1868.

S. T. Glover, St. Louis:

My Dear Sir,—I am greatly obliged for your favor of the 13th inst. Those who suppose that I do not acquiesce in the work of the National Democratic Convention, or that I do not sincerely desire the election of its nominees, know very little of my character. Believing as I really do, that the preservation of constitutional government eminently depends on the success of the Democratic party in the coming election, were I to hesitate in its candid support, I feel I should not only falsify my own record, but commit a crime against my country. I never aspired to the Presidency on account of myself. I never sought its doubtful honors and certain labors and responsibilities merely for the position. My own wish was to promote, if I could, the good of the country, and to rebuke the spirit of revolution which had invaded every sacred precinct of liberty. When, therefore, you pronounced the statements in question false, you did exactly

right. Principles and not men is the motto for the rugged crisis in which we are now struggling. Had I been made the Presidential nominee, I should have considered it a tribute, not to me, but to the principles which I had proclaimed and practised. But shall I cease to revere those principles because, by mutual political friends, another has been appointed to put them into execution? Never! Never! Never!

These, sir, are my sentiments, whatever interested parties may say to the contrary; and I desire that all may know and understand them. I shall ever hold in grateful remembrance the faithful friends who, hailing from every section of the Union, preferred me by their votes and other expressions of confidence, both in and out of the Convention, and shall do them all the justice to believe that they were governed by patriotic motives; that they did not propose simply to aggrandize my personal fortunes, but to save their country through me; and that they will not suffer anything like personal preferences or jealousies to stand between them and their manifest duty.

I have the honor to be, dear sir, very respectfully yours,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

General Hancock had spent three years in command of the Department of Dakota, and had been transferred back to the Department of the Atlantic, when his name was again presented for the consideration of the National Democratic Convention as a candidate for the Presidency. During this time he had been quietly performing the duties of his office, taking no part in public life; but the people had not forgotten him or his great and priceless services to the country.

The National Democratic Convention of 1876 met at St. Louis, June 27, Gen. John A. McClernand of

Illinois presiding. On the afternoon of the second day, the States were called upon to name candidates for the nomination; and this time it was his own State of Pennsylvania which proposed General Hancock. The presentation was made by Hon. Heister Clymer in the following speech: —

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: I am charged by the delegation from the State of Pennsylvania, representing three hundred and twenty-five thousand Democrats, to present in their name, and by their authority, as their unanimous choice for the highest elective office on earth, the name of one born on their soil and dear to their hearts; the name of one whose character is the embodiment of all that is chivalrous in manhood and excellent in morals; the name of one who never drew his sword save in defence of his country's honor, or in obedience to her laws; the name of one who, in the hour of supreme victory, never forgot a common brotherhood; the name of one who, although the very exemplar of grim-visaged war, is yet the sincerest and lowliest devotee of the Constitution and the law; the name of one who, in the plenitude of military power, when dishonored, dismembered, and dismantled States were placed in his absolute sway, declared that the liberty of the press, the habeas corpus, the right of trial by jury, the right of persons and of property must be maintained; the name of one whose fame and reputation are true to every American citizen of whatever race or color, party or creed—the name of Winfield Scott Hancock.

We present it to you as the very shibboleth of victory. No man may doubt his honor; no man will dare to question his integrity. About him closes the affection of tens of thousands of men who sat with him by the camp-fire, who have gone with him through the shadow of death, and whom

he has led into the clear sunlight of victory. And there are other tens of thousands who have never met him, save as foemen in battle-array, amid the roar of cannon and the blood and carnage of civil strife, who yet never breathe his name save in honor, and to whom he is endeared by his kindness, his justice, his mercy, and by his devotion to the Constitution and the law. His past record is his pledge for the future; we point to it with pride and rely upon it with unshaken faith. Standing here upon the banks of this mighty river, in this imperial centre, we ask the brethren from all the sections of the Republic to unite with us in proclaiming him our nominee. His is no sectional fame; his will be no sectional support, and his will be no partisan victory. Good men everywhere, men who are devoted to the Constitution and the law, men who denounce fraud and corruption, men who are determined to give to the people of all the States the inestimable boon of home rule and self-government, men who are determined to drive out from high places the thieves who have fattened upon the ill-gotten gains wrenched from citizen and soldier alike, men who are opposed to the infamous and corrupt military systems by which want, misery, suffering, and almost universal bankruptcy are brought upon this land, will unite with us upon this son of ours; and if they so unite, who may doubt the result?

Mr. Chairman, once in his career — history will record it as a fact — he saved his State, and through her the union of these States, at Gettysburg. If you nominate him in this Convention, history will record another fact, that he will rescue his State in November next, and thus rescue the Federal Government from the degradation and misrule which now curse it.

Gen. Joseph L. Brent then appeared on the rostrum and addressed the Convention as follows: —

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: I would not have ventured to trouble this Convention if the delegation of the great State of Pennsylvania had not expressed their wish that something should be said in behalf of and in relation to their favorite son, who, in the State of Louisiana made a civil record while he was exercising powers and functions not exceeded by any governor or government except that of the Sultan of Turkey or the Shah of Persia, and which government he exercised in the same spirit that George Washington, the father of his country, exhibited when, the war of the Revolution being terminated, he sheathed his sword and delivered his commission to the civil authorities of the country. Therefore, gentlemen, human gratitude would be but an expression if a son of Louisiana should hear the name of Winfield Scott Hancock mentioned. We in Louisiana and in the South, know General Hancock as the great Union winner in war and in peace. Along the fateful heights of Gettysburg, in the dark thickets of the Wilderness, we knew him, standing in the van and fore-front of the late war, as the champion and embodiment of Columbia *victrix et benevolens;* and when peace came, and over this broad Republic no flag was seen but the flag of our common country, we recognize him again as the representative of Columbia *victrix et benevolens*, declaring to ten millions of his fellow citizens that there still remain to them the civil birth-right and inheritance of the fathers — habeas corpus, trial by jury, protection to property in due course of law. Therefore, gentlemen, he has won us to the Union twice — by arms and in peace; and I cannot but think that the prosperity and safety of the country will be assured by him who has been illustrious in war and wise and generous in peace.

Mr. F. B. Sexton of Texas then arose and addressed

the Convention in further support of the nomination. He said:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen: I come from a far-off State of this Union, and on the extreme south-western border; and I feel it my duty to say, and it is my pleasure to say, that there are a very considerable number of the people of that State who entertain the opinion that Pennsylvania's distinguished son, Gen. Winfield S. Hancock, is a pure patriot and a distinguished statesman, endowed by nature and by cultivation with ability and intelligence fully equal to discharge the high and responsible duties of President of the United States. I should not have felt it my duty to say this much had I not been invited by the Pennsylvania delegation, and also because, while a very large majority of my fellow-delegates who represent the State of Texas entertain the opinion that another distinguished gentleman is the most available candidate whom we can present at this time for the consideration of the American people, there are a considerable number in Texas who think that General Hancock is that man. It is just and right to them, and to the sentiment which I represent for them, that this should be made known, and for the discharge of this duty I appear before you.

I have simply to say, as was said by the gentleman from Louisiana, that the ability of General Hancock as a statesman has been tried in Texas by the severest of all ordeals—the ordeal of experience. It gives me pleasure to say this much, and to say if General Hancock should be nominated by this Convention he will receive a most enthusiastic support. I know I speak the sentiment of Texas when I say this—that he will receive a most enthusiastic support from the whole of Texas.

But, like my colleague who addressed you, I say further,

that whoever may be nominated of the distinguished gentlemen whose names have been presented before you, you need have no doubt about the majority in Texas. We have ten thousand Democratic votes to give to the nominee of this Convention, and we only ask that those of you who come from the older and the greater States of this Union will present us a man who will be sure to win us success in November.

But it was not to be. The fulness of time had not come. General Hancock received seventy-five votes on the first ballot, standing third on the list; and on the second ballot ex-Governor Tilden was nominated. Pennsylvania voted for Hancock to the last; and when the result was known, it was his State which moved to make the nomination of Mr. Tilden unanimous.

GEN. HANCOCK'S RESIDENCE, GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, N. Y.

CHAPTER X.

The Cincinnati Convention of 1880.— Daniel Dougherty of Philadelphia nominates General Hancock.— Speech of Governor Hubbard of Texas, Seconding the Nomination.— The First Ballot.— Hancock Nominated on the Second Ballot.— Enthusiasm in the Convention.— Speeches of Wade Hampton, Speaker Randall, Senator Wallace, Voorhees, and others.

THE time at last came when the Democratic party, the constitutional party of the United States, was to call upon this soldier of the Constitution to lead the people in the contest for popular rule throughout the length and breadth of the land. The passage of time had rendered only more brilliant the record of General Hancock in civil as well as military affairs, and it was seen that, in solving the problems of administration pressing upon the country, his strong principle and clear patriotism were needed.

The National Democratic Convention met at Cincinnati, O., on the 22d of June, 1880, Hon. John W. Stevenson of Kentucky presiding. The first day was occupied in organization, and on the second day the roll of the States was called for candidates. When Pennsylvania was reached, the chairman of that delegation announced that the State had no candidate to present as the unanimous choice of the delegates, but that one of the delegates wished to make a nomination. Mr. Daniel Dougherty then proceeded to the platform, and spoke as follows:—

I present to the thoughtful consideration of the convention the name of one who, on the field of battle, was styled "the superb," yet won still nobler renown as the Military Governor whose first act, in assuming command in Louisiana and Texas, was to salute the Constitution by proclaiming, amid the joyous greetings of an oppressed people, that the military, save in actual war, shall be subservient to the civil power.

The plighted word of the soldier was proved in the deeds of the statesman.

I name one who, if nominated, will suppress every faction, and be alike acceptable to the North and to the South. Whose nomination will thrill the land from end to end, crush the embers of sectional strife, and be hailed as the dawning of the longed-for day of perpetual brotherhood.

With him we can fling away our shields and wage aggressive war. With him as our chieftain the bloody banner of the Republicans will fall from their palsied grasp. We can appeal to the supreme tribunal of the American people against the corruptions of the Republican party and its untold violations of constitutional liberty.

Oh! my countrymen, in this supreme moment, the destinies of the Republic, the imperilled liberties of the people, hang breathless on your deliberations. Pause! reflect! beware! take no misstep.

I nominate him who can carry every Southern State. Can carry Pennsylvania, Indiana, Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York. The soldier-statesman, with a record stainless as his sword. I nominate Winfield Scott Hancock of Pennsylvania. If elected he will take his seat.

This ringing speech was received with great applause, and when the State of Texas was reached, the nomination was seconded in the same stirring strain by Gov-

ernor Hubbard, a delegate from that State. Governor Hubbard said: —

Gentlemen of the Convention: I have but a word to say. I rise by request, a request which meets the impulses of my own bosom, to second the nomination of the soldier-statesman, Winfield S. Hancock. Men of the Convention, it is peculiarly fit that Texas, that Louisiana, should respond to that nomination. Hear me for a moment.

When the war closed; when the flag that some of us followed was furled forever; when again the Constitution of the fathers was the supreme law of the land, as it is now and ever shall be, there came down through the Southland, through my own State, and Louisiana especially, a race of carpet-baggers, like the Vandals of old, preying upon our wasted substance. Military governors filled the bastiles with prisoners from civil life. Men who had committed naught but fancied offences against the government were crowded in every jail and in every bastile from the Rio Grande to the "Father of Waters." In that hour when we had lost all; when by the side of every hearthstone were weeping Rachels; when the wolf was howling at almost every door; when there was widowhood and orphanage everywhere, there came a voice in that darkness of the night-time that said to us, "I am your military ruler; the war has closed; unbar your dungeons, open your courts and be tried as the Constitution prescribes." That man was Winfield S. Hancock. It was an easy thing to be a summer friend; but at the time of our sorrow, when he held his office at the hands of the great Republican party, who could, and did remove him, there stood a man, with the Constitution before him, reading it as the fathers read it; that the war having passed we resumed the habiliments that belonged to us — our rights, not as a conquered province, but as a free people. The voice of a man

like Hancock, who risked his reputation and his place and power in the very frown and teeth of the Republican party, is a man that it will do to trust the standard of your party to.

Sir, he is not only a soldier; that is something in the contest that is to be waged, as the gallant Hampton has told you. The South will be united, whoever you may nominate. But failing in principle, failing upon every issue of finance or of reform or of good government, to attack the record of the Democratic party; mark it, the slogan will be "The bloody South; the old haven of rebellion still lives." You will hear it from the mountains and your highlands; you will hear it all along the lines. If you nominate Hancock, if you nominate Hancock, where is the argument? We can say everywhere, here is a soldier second not even to the silent man on horseback. Here is a soldier that bore down even upon us like the brigade at Balaclava, like a plumed knight to the front; here is a man whom one hundred thousand Northern soldiers, if they are like Southern soldiers, will rally around his standard, because he was a great soldier, and a good man and a faithful citizen when the war was over.

General Hancock is not wanting in all the eloquence of the statesman. Read his letter to Governor Pease. It is worthy of being placed upon the proudest pages of American history. In the letter he discussed and asserted the superiority and supremacy of the civil power over the sword and spear. I have nothing more to say except this, that if you nominate him, not only the South will stand around him ag the Old Guard did around Napoleon, but I believe the soldiers of the great North, the men who honestly fought us in that greatest of human conflicts. And with that, a record that is without stain and without reproach; with no Credit Mobilier scandal or DeGolyer frauds around him. With a stainless name, blending together the soldier and the statesman, we will win after a quarter of a century. We will win

the contest, and when won, if there is a man living in the broad confines of this great country who will wear these honors, it is Winfield S. Hancock of Pennsylvania.

Then followed other endorsments as the roll-call of the States proceeded; among them Hon. John W. Daniel said: —

We are here to-day embarrassed by the very brilliancy and variety of the names which have challenged public favor for the first office in the people's gift. Jurists who have worn untarnished ermine; statesmen who have moulded the policy, shaped the measures, and fought the battles of the party; soldiers who have enriched our history with feats of arms, and who are battle-scarred with wounds of honor; orators, scholars, thinkers, actors in every leading enterprise of a practical nature or intellectual endeavor, stand in glittering array around us, worthy to be crowned with any honor or to be the recipient of any trust that this great public can bestow. The question which I have asked myself; the question which, it seems to me, should be the index-finger to guide our work to a wise conclusion, is this: Who is that man among them who can interlace together the heart-strings of this American people? Who is that man who can make to permeate through every portion of this mighty country those sentiments of mutual confidence and of brotherly love which once abided among us before the schism of the secession war? When I have asked the question, the heart of every man gives me answer that that man is Winfield Scott Hancock of Pennsylvania. Did I say of Pennsylvania? Winfield Scott Hancock of the United States; of every State by his good right hand united. They tell us, gentlemen, that this country is tired of the rule of the camp and of the sword. They tell us that the people are weary of martial habits and of martial measures.

I acknowledge that fact; but all the more will they welcome with gladsome greetings the man who first abolishes them.

Who is he, indeed? He is the man who abolished the rule of the camp in civil places.

All the more ready are we, therefore, to receive into our hearts him who was the first to salute with his stainless sword the majesty of the civil law; who was the first to bow with knightly crest at the bar of civil justice; who was the first of all whose voice was heard crying aloud in the wilderness of despotism, "Make the way straight for the reign of peace and for the sovereignty of the people."

Bethink you not, my friends, that the American people are so indiscriminating as to apprehend the embryo of a Brutus or the embryo of a Cæsar in the man who was the Brutus of unhallowed arbitrary power.

Those words came to this country like a sunburst upon a wintry day. They were like the springing up of a fountain in a desert. They were like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And long after this great Convention has passed away from earth, the millions who are to come after us will be singing upon their tongues those words which belong to Runnymede and the Magna Charta. The great principles of American liberty are still the lawful inheritance of this people. The trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the freedom of speech, the liberty of the press, the natural rights of persons and the rights of property must be preserved.

They tell us that we, the American people, do not want a soldier. The greatest and best, the magistrate without a peer, was who? George Washington, the soldier. George Washington whose life had been spent in the saddle, and whose history is musical with the clinking of the spur. Madison and Monroe were soldiers. Jackson and Harrison and Taylor were soldiers. Buchanan and Lincoln had both borne arms for the Republic. All adown the line of your

Presidents for one hundred years are the sparkling names of American soldiers.

And why shall we not now follow the footsteps of our fathers and present the greatest office which this Republic can bestow to that great Democratic soldier who shed his blood for his people, yet who proved as generous to the conquered as he was loyal to the conquering banner.

Just one word more. The nomination of General Hancock means instantaneous and continuous aggression. It will sound to America like a general order from the council of war: "We move on the enemy's works to-morrow." The signal sounds the advance. The bugles ring boots and saddles, the standard to the front with the nomination of Hancock, and you will hear the tread of the moving legions. I am reminded here that the first man yesterday, whose very presence in this Convention touched the heart and brought forth spontaneously its applause, was the soldier-statesman of South Carolina Nominate Winfield Scott Hancock, and let the last cheer of this Convention go up for the Union soldiers who have shown themselves so generous in welcoming us. Then, my friends, in this canvass, you will hear the hearty hurrah of the boys who wore the blue, mingling with the wild music of the rebel cheer in one grand national anthem. Then, my friends, the divided tribes, who, like the Romans of old, have come down from the mountain of secession, will roll in one mighty and undivided stream for the regeneration of this nation.

Then the Convention, having refused to adjourn, demanded a ballot; and the result showed Hancock's name at the head of the list. He received 171 votes. The other candidates were Senator Bayard, who received 153½; Senator Thurman, 68½; Judge Field, 65; Morrison, 62; Hendricks, 49½; Tilden, 38; Ewing, 10.

Then the Convention adjourned. When it met in the third day's session, Thursday, June 24, Mr. Tilden's name was withdrawn by the New York delegation, and a ballot was at once taken. When the clerk had reached Illinois in the call for States, the tide of balloting was seen to set strongly toward Hancock, and from that moment to the close there were no votes but for the favorite.

The nomination was made unanimous amid a scene of enthusiasm such as the oldest veterans of Democratic conventions had never seen. Then came the speeches of ratification and congratulation. The factions of the New York Democracy publically proclaimed their reconciliation, and on all sides there were eager voices endorsing the candidacy of the hero-statesman. Senator Wade Hampton said: —

On behalf of the "Solid South"—that South which once was arrayed against the great soldier of Pennsylvania—in their name I stand here to pledge you its solid vote.

We will prove no laggards in this great race for constitutional government, for home rule, and for freedom all over this great land. There is no name which is held in higher respect among the people of the South than that of the man whom you have given us as our standard-bearer.

We have met him on the field of battle. We knew then that he was a brave, a gallant, an able soldier,—one who always conducted war upon civilized principles; and when the war ended, he was among the first to extend his kindly hand to aid the people who had been fighting against him. We recognize that, and recognizing it, we will give him a cordial, a hearty, and an earnest support. And in the name of South Carolina—that State which has so lately emerged and come

into the sisterhood of States—that State which was so overwhelmingly Republican that we scarcely dared to count the Democratic vote,—in behalf of that State I here pledge myself, if work, if zeal, if energy can do anything, I pledge the people of South Carolina to give as large a Democratic vote as any other State in this Union.

Congressman Randall, who had himself been named as a candidate, said:—

I am here to second the nomination of Pennsylvania's son, General Hancock. Your deliberations have been marked with the utmost harmony, and your act is an impress of the heart of the American Democrat in every State in the Union. Not only is your nomination strong, but it is one that will bring us victory, and we will add another State to the Democratic column, the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the keystone of the Federal arch. Not only is this acceptable to every Democrat in the United States, but it is a nomination which will command the respect of the entire American people.

Senator Wallace of Pennsylvania said:—

History repeats itself. In this great city of Cincinnati the Democrats of the nation named their last President; and to-day they name the next. History repeats itself. In those days they named a son of Pennsylvania, and to-day again they inscribe upon the banners of the Democracy the name of the gallant son of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He will lead us to victory. His name is invincible. The word rings out: "Advance the column! Move on the enemy's works! Let there be no defence, but aggression! aggression!! aggression!!! and victory is ours."

Senator Voorhees said :—

The spectacle of a military man subordinating the military power to the civil authorities, is one of the most pleasant spectacles of history. This General Hancock has won upon the heart of his country. Washington was a soldier, but his greatest achievement was when he said that the laws of his country were above the sword and above military power. Hancock won renown upon many battle-fields, shed his blood upon many battle-fields, rode down the line as proud a figure in military history as Marshal Ney or any other Marshal that ever commanded men. But his proudest act was, when placed in command of what was thought by our radical opponents, crushed, broken and ruined States, he had the sagacity, he had the patriotism, to lift up the down-trodden civil authorities, to say, "Soldier that I am, the laws that protect freedom of speech, trial by jury, habeas corpus, shall be upheld by me by the sword that is in my hand." He spoke for civil liberty when it was overthrown throughout one-half of this country; in that act he made a second Declaration of Independence for the Southern States. He made a second declaration of constitutional liberty, and set an example for his own and for our future generations of obedience to that great framework devised by our fathers, protected and enjoyed by us. He is worthy of your confidence.

Thus was Winfield Scott Hancock placed in nomination for the highest office in the gift of the American people; and the platform of principles with which the Convention accompanied his nomination could set forth none more glorious than those great ideas of free popular government which his career so brilliantly illustrates. An honorable and upright life, filled with

earnest and patriotic endeavor, was crowned with the highest honor in the gift of the great party of the people.

On the 13th of July, the committee appointed by the Democratic Convention, headed by Governor Stevenson, the chairman, waited upon General Hancock, at his pleasant and breezy home on Governor's Island, New York harbor, and formally tendered him the nomination. In the letter conveying the official nomination, Governor Stevenson said: "That which chiefly inspired your nomination was the fact that you had conspicuously recognized and exemplified the yearning of the American people for reconciliation and brotherhood under the shield of the Constitution, with all its zealous care and guarantees for the rights of persons and States."

It is in this attitude and this character that General Hancock stands before the American people, — the soldier, patriot, and statesman whom all honor and all trust.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Wm. H. English

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND PUBLIC CAREER

OF

WILLIAM H. ENGLISH,

OF INDIANA.

CHAPTER I.

Parentage of William H. English.— Sound Democratic Stock.— His Boyhood Days.— Education and Admission to the Bar.— Admitted to Practice in the United States Supreme Court at the Age of Twenty-three.— He enters Politics in the Polk Campaign.— Clerkship at Washington.— The Constitutional Convention.— Elected to the Legislature.— Nominated as Speaker of the House.— His Election to that Office.

In the little village of Lexington, Scott County, Ind., on the 27th of August, 1822, was born William H. English. The father of this child, Maj. Elisha G. English, emigrated from Kentucky to Lexington in 1818, and was one in whom all who knew him reposed the highest confidence. As one of the pioneers of the State, he was called upon to aid in its government, as sheriff several times, and during twenty years a member of the Indiana House of Representatives or Senate, and for some time the United States marshal for Indiana.

Maj. Elisha G. English died at his son's residence in Indianapolis, Nov. 14, 1874, and is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Mahala English, the mother of William H. English, is also a native of Kentucky, and is now residing with her son in Indianapolis, having attained the age of eighty-two years.

The paternal grandfather of William H. English was Elisha English, born March 2, 1768, near Laurel, Sus-

chosen principal clerk of the House of Representatives of his own State, over several competitors who were politically very strong.

James D. Williams, now the venerable and respected governor of Indiana, was then, for the first time, a member of the House, and he has several times made public mention of the fact that Mr. English then performed the same duties, and most satisfactorily, too, with the aid of one assistant, that in these later years over half a dozen are paid to perform.

It was soon after the close of this session of the Legislature that the presidential canvass was opened, wherein the Whigs were led by Henry Clay, and the Democrats took up the then almost unknown James K. Polk. To the election of the latter gentleman, Mr. English contributed largely by his energy and brilliant work; and after the election he was given a position in the Treasury Department at Washington. Inasmuch as he was not the man to disguise his principles, or to make an effort to keep a place under an administration in which he was not in full sympathy, and as he voted for the nomination of Cass in the next National Convention, and strenuously opposed the election of General Taylor, he sent a letter of resignation to Mr. Polk, which was extensively copied by the Democratic press, together with comments approving the independent spirit of its author.

In the National Convention of 1848, Mr. English's father, Elisha G. English, and his uncle, Revel W. English, were vice-presidents, and two other uncles delegates. It was in this convention that he first met

Samuel J. Tilden, who was then a delegate from the State of New York. It may also be mentioned, as showing the foundation-stone of Mr. English's political faith, that four of the English brothers were members of the Legislature in four different States, and all of the Democratic persuasion.

Thus it will be seen that Mr. English is a Democrat by the sober judgment of his maturer manhood, as well as by the inheritance and traditions of his family; and it may be said that the commanding positions he has held, his large experience, and his knowledge of men and measures, all combine to strengthen his convictions that the principles of the Democratic party must prevail if we are to have a united and prosperous country. His own idea of what these principles are will be best understood by the following vigorous and forcible words, uttered by him in a lately published interview:

"I am for honesty in money as in politics and morals, and think the great material and business interests of this country should be placed upon the most solid basis, and as far as possible from the blighting influence of demagogues. At the same time I am opposed to class legislation, and in favor of protecting and fostering the interests of the laboring and producing classes in every legitimate way possible. A pure, economical, constitutional government, that will protect the liberty of the people and the property of the people, without destroying the rights of the States or aggrandizing its own powers beyond the limits of the Constitution, is the kind of government contemplated by the fathers; and by that I think the Democracy propose to stand."

In the United States Senate, during the memorable

session of the compromise of 1850, when Calhoun and Cass, Clay and Webster, and other great statesmen of the day vied with each other in those able forensic efforts which obtained so much celebrity, and led to the results so gratifying to every American patriot, Mr. English was a clerk of the Claims Committee. It was the pure patriotism of such men as were in the Senate at that time, the grandeur of their eloquence, and the far-reaching benefits of the measures proposed and advocated, that left such a fadeless impression on Mr. English's mind as inspired his ambition, broadened his views, and contributed largely in giving him influence in the councils of the nation when he became a member of the National Legislature.

At the close of this extraordinary session he resigned his position, and returned to his home; but only to be called to more labor in the interest of his country.

The people of Indiana had just decided to call a Convention to revise the State Constitution, which had been adopted in 1816; and, after an existence of over a third of a century, the adoption of a new Constitution, in accord with the spirit of the times, was approached with much caution. Every one felt the necessity of confiding the trust to the wisest and best men in the State; and it is doubtful whether a superior body of men ever assembled for a like purpose than that which assembled at Indianapolis, in October, 1850, to prepare a Constitution for the State of Indiana. Mr. English had the honor of being elected the principal Secretary of the Convention, and of officially attesting the Constitution, which was prepared by the

Convention after over four months' deliberation, and which was ratified by an overwhelming vote of the people.

At the adjournment, the Convention assigned to Mr. English the important trust of supervising the publication of the Constitution, the journals, addresses, etc. As Secretary of the Convention, he added largely to his reputation, and the fact was recognized that his abilities were of a character to command a wider sphere of usefulness to the party and to the country.

The adoption of the new Constitution made a necessity for a thorough revision of the laws of the State, and the same high order of talent was needed to mould the laws as had been required to prepare the Constitution itself. It was, therefore, a signal honor to Mr. English, that he was elected, in 1851, to represent his native county in the State Legislature against an opposition majority, and over a competitor considered the strongest and most popular man of his party in the county. This was the first meeting of the Legislature under the provisions of the new Constitution; and judgment and discretion were required of the Legislature to put the new State machinery into harmonious and successful operation. Therefore, it was no small compliment to so young man as Mr. English, to have been chosen over so many older and more experienced citizens.

But this was not the only honor which was to be his. Notwithstanding the fact that he was but twenty-nine years of age, that it was his first session as a member, and that there were many old and distinguished men in

that Legislature, when the caucus to nominate a Speaker was held, he received twenty-two votes to thirty-one for Hon. John W. Davis, who had long been a member and Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and had also been Minister to China.

Early in the session, on a disagreement between the House and Speaker Davis, he called Mr. English to the chair, and resigned the position of Speaker. The next day Mr. English was elected by twenty-eight majority, and it may be mentioned as an evidence of his popularity as a presiding officer, that during his long term of service — over three months — no appeal was taken from any of his decisions. And this is the more remarkable since it was the first session under the new Constitution, when many new points had to be decided.

Previous to the election of Mr. English as Spaeker, he was selected by Speaker Davis as one of a committee of five to revise the laws of the State, but declined. But many radical and highly beneficial reforms in the laws of the State were made at this session, to the success of which Mr. English largely contributed, and which, in some instances, he originated, such as the change in the system of taxing railroads, and the substitution of the present short form of deeds, mortgages, etc., for long and intricate forms.

Mr. English has, in an eminent degree, that force and energy of character which lead to successful action, and has left his impress upon the measures of every deliberative body, company, or association to which he has belonged. In a word, he has all the elements of a

bold, aggressive, and successful leadership. If lost with a multitude in a pathless wilderness, he would not lag behind waiting for some one else to open up the path of escape. He would be more apt to promptly advise which was the best way out, or to make the road himself and call upon his comrades to follow.

CHAPTER II.

Election to Congress.—The Famous Kansas-Nebraska Bill and Mr English's Action Thereon.—The "Popular Sovereignty" Idea.—Relations with Douglas.—Mr. English's Position on the Slavery Question.—His Second Election to Congress.—Labor against Know-Nothingism.—Regent of the Smithsonian Institute.—Third Election to Congress.—The Slavery Agitation and Lecompton Constitution.—The "English Bill" and its Author's Views upon it.

It was at the close of the long session of the Legislature of 1851, after he had won the highest praise from men of both parties, and was looked upon by the Democrats as a man of sound political views and unswerving integrity, that he was asked to allow his name to be used for the Congressional election. Consenting, he was nominated, and in October, 1852, elected by 488 majority over John D. Ferguson.

Mr. English entered Congress at the commencement of Mr. Pierce's administration, and gave its political measures the same support that he had shown during the election, in which he aided to no slight extent.

Regarding the time and the man, an eminent writer has said:—

"It was a memorable period in the history of the country; a time when questions of far-reaching consequences had their birth; and which a few years subsequently tested to the utmost limit the strength of the Republic. It was the time for the display of unselfish patriotism, lofty purpose, moral courage, and unwavering devotion to the Constitution. Mr.

English met the demand. He was equal to the responsibility of the occasion. He never disappointed his constituents, his party, or his country. He displayed his national qualities of prudence, sagacity, and firmness."

At the opening of this Congress the famous Kansas-Nebraska bill was introduced. Mr. English was a member of the House Committee on Territories, which was charged with the consideration and report of the bill; he did not concur with the majority of the committee in the propriety and expediency of bringing forward the measure at that time, and made a minority report on Jan. 31, 1854, proposing several important amendments, which, although not directly adopted, for reasons hereafter explained, probably led to modifications of the bill of the Senate, which bill was finally adopted as an amendment to the House bill, and enacted into a law. Both the House and Senate bill, at the time Mr. English made his minority report, contained a provision "that the Constitution, and all laws of the United States which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said territory as elsewhere in the United States;" and then followed this important reservation:—

"Except the eighth section of this act preparatory to the admission of Missouri into the Union, approved March 6, 1820, which was superseded by the principles of the legislation of 1850, commonly called the compromise measures, and is hereby declared inoperative."

Mr. English proposed to strike out this exception and insert the following:—

"*Provided*, That nothing in this act shall be so construed as to prevent the people of said territory, through the properly constituted legislative authority, from passing such laws in relation to the institution of slavery, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, as they may deem best adapted to their locality, and most conducive to their happiness and welfare; and so much of any existing act of Congress as may conflict with the above right of the people to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, be, and the same is, hereby repealed."

Mr. Greeley, in his "American Conflict," expresses the belief that this proposition of Mr. English could not have been defeated on the call of the yeas and nays; and the author explains and condemns the new and ingenious parliamentary manœuvre resorted to at the time, which cut off all amendments but the substitution of the Senate bill for the bill of the House. The parliamentary manœuvre referred to, brought the House to a vote on the Senate bill, which, in the meantime, had been offered as a substitute for the House bill, and it was adopted and became the law. On February 7, the Senate adopted an amendment, very similar in purpose, offered by Senator Douglas.

Senator Douglas was justly regarded as the great leader and champion of the "popular sovereignty" idea. So far as the advocacy of that principle was concerned, Mr. English was with him, and it will not be out of place to state here, that although some slight political differences ultimately sprang up between them in relation to the "English Bill," they were always personal friends, and for many years the relations

between them were of the most intimate character. As far back as 1845, Mr. Douglas wrote President Polk, urging that Mr. English be appointed Recorder in the general land office; and Mr. English has many letters from Mr. Douglas expressing the most cordial friendship.

During the eight years immediately preceding the war, Mr. English was in Congress, and more or less identified with the measures involving the question of slavery, and his opinion on the question can best be given in extracts from his own speeches:—

"I am a native of a free State, and have no love for the institution of slavery. Aside from the moral question involved, I regard it as an injury to the State where it exists, and if it were proposed to introduce it where I reside, would resist it to the last extremity."

Again he says, when speaking of the slaveholding States:—

"They are the best judges of the soil, and climate, and wants of the country they inhabit; they are the true judges of what will best suit their own condition, and promote their welfare and happiness."

On another occasion, speaking for himself and his constituency, he said:—

"We do not like this institution of slavery, neither in its moral, social, nor political bearings, but consider that it is a matter which, like all other domestic affairs, each organized community ought to be allowed to decide for itself."

The idea of "leaving the people of every State and Territory perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States," seemed to be in accordance with the genius of our American institutions; but the storm raised by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, resulted in the defeat of nearly all the members from the free States who voted for it. In fact, Mr. English was one of only three in the country who had sufficient strength to survive the storm.

He was unanimously nominated for re-election to Congress, and elected by a majority of five hundred and eighty-eight over the Whig and Know-Nothing opponent, Judge Thomas C. Slaughter.

It was during Mr. English's congressional career that the country was visited by the fanatical cyclone, known as Know-Nothingism, and he threw himself, in a spirit of self-abnegation, into the work of crushing it out, until he won the applause of all right-thinking men, and proved to the foreign-born citizens that he was their friend indeed. A native of Indiana, speaking of Mr. English's work in this direction, says:—

"It was a Democratic victory to which no man in the nation contributed more than did William H. English in his gallant canvass against the Know-Nothings in the Second Congressional district of Indiana in 1854."

Mr. English was a Regent of the Smithsonian Institute for eight years, and during the Thirty-fourth Congress made a speech in defence of the management of

the institution, which was highly commended by many eminent scientific gentlemen. Mr. Charles Henry Davis went so far as to write a letter in which he said that Mr. English was entitled to "the gratitude and friendly regard of every scientific man in the country whose opinions are thought worth repeating."

At the end of Mr. English's second term, he avowed his intention of retiring from public life, and requested his constituents to select some other candidate. The convention met to nominate his successor, and, after balloting forty-two times without making a choice, finally determined, unanimously, to insist upon Mr. English taking the field for the third time. He reluctantly consented to this, and was elected by a still larger majority than before.

It was during his third term that Speaker Orr appointed him to the important and arduous position of chairman of the Committee on Post-offices and Post-roads.

In the meantime, the agitation of the slavery question continued, and the Kansas controversy assumed a new and more dangerous aspect than ever. It was during this Congress that, by his course upon the Kansas policy of the administration, Mr. English acquired his widest reputation. He steadily and firmly opposed the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, until it had been ratified by a vote of the people.

In a speech delivered by him in the House of Representatives, he clearly defined his position. "I think," said he, "before Kansas is admitted, her people ought

to ratify, or, at least, have a fair opportunity to vote upon the Constitution under which it is proposed to admit her. At the same time, I am not so wedded to any particular plan that I may not, for the sake of harmony, and as a choice of evils, make reasonable concessions, provided the substance would be secured, which is the making of the Constitution, at an early day, conform to the public will, or, at least, that the privilege and opportunity of so making it be secured to the people beyond all question. Less than this would not satisfy the expectations of my constituents, and I would not betray their wishes for any earthly considerations. If, on the other hand, all reasonable compromises are voted down, and I am brought to vote upon the naked and unqualified admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, I distinctly declare that I cannot, in conscience, vote for it."

During the long and exciting contest over this question, Mr. English never departed from the position taken in this speech. He was "Anti-Lecompton," but not of those who wished to cripple the administration or break up the Democratic organization. He boldly and eloquently appealed to his Southern colleagues. Alluding to the recent defeat of the Democracy at the North, he said: —

"It should not be forgotten, that when we men of the North went forth to encounter this fearful army of fanatics,— this great army of Abolitionists, Know-Nothings, and Republicans combined,—you, gentlemen of the South, were at home at your ease, because you had not run counter to the sympathies and popular sentiments of your people: you went with the

current; we against it. We risked everything; you comparatively nothing; and now I appeal to you, whether, for the sake of an empty triumph, of no permanent benefit to you or your 'peculiar institution,' you will turn a deaf ear to our earnest entreaties for such an adjustment of this question as will enable us to respect the wishes of our constituents, and maintain the union and integrity of our party at home? Look to it, ye men of the South, that you do not, for a mere shadow, strike down or drive from you your only effective support outside the limits of your own States."

On this bill an issue was formed between the great co-ordinate branches of the government, whose joint and harmonious action could alone remove the dangerous question and give peace to the country.

At this stage of proceedings, when there appeared no hope for a settlement of the disagreement between the two Houses, and there was every chance that the angry contest would be adjourned for further and protracted agitation before a people already inflamed with sectional animosities, Mr. English moved to concur in the proposition of the Senate, asking for a committee of free conference. The motion was adopted by the deciding vote of the Speaker, and the committee on the part of the House was composed of W. H. English of Indiana, A. H. Stephens of Georgia, and W. A. Howard of Michigan. On the part of the Senate, the committee was J. S. Greene of Missouri, R. M. T. Hunter of Virginia, and W. H. Seward of New York.

As the Senate had asked for the conference, the managers on behalf of that branch of Congress were informed by Mr. English that propositions for a com-

promise must first come from them. If they had none to offer, the managers on the part of the House had none, and the conference would immediately terminate. The managers on the part of the Senate made several propositions, none of which, however, were acceptable to the members on behalf of the House.

The Senate committee then asked the members from the House if they had any compromise to offer, to which Mr. English replied that he had none prepared; but he had a plan in his mind, based, however, upon the principle of a submission of the question of admission under the Lecompton Constitution and an amended ordinance to a fair vote of the people of Kansas; and if the committee thought it worth while, he would prepare it, and submit it to them at their next meeting. They told him to do so. This was the origin of the great Kansas compromise measure, commonly called the "English Bill," which finally passed both branches of Congress and became the law.

This law was, in effect, to place it in the power of the people of Kansas to come into the Union under the Lecompton Constitution or not, as they might themselves determine at a fair election.

Mr. Buchanan, the President, was highly gratified, and wrote to Mr. English: —

"I consider the present occasion the most fortunate of your life. It will be your fate to end the dangerous agitation, to confer lasting benefits on your country, and to render your character historical. I shall remain always your friend."

The night after the passage of the bill great rejoic-

ings were held in Washington, and both the President and Mr. English were serenaded. In the course of Mr. English's remarks on the occasion, he said: —

"Let us all stand together in this great confederacy as equals, each State having the right to regulate its own domestic institutions in its own way; and let us apply this doctrine not only to Kansas, but to all the Territories which may come into this Union for all time to come. That is the doctrine of the Democratic party; and when that party is struck down, the best interests of the country will be struck down. Stop this agitation and let us act, not like visionary fanatics, but practical men. Let well enough alone, and leave the solution of this matter to time and Providence. If we cannot stand upon the doctrine of non-intervention, where can we stand in safety?

"I am here as one of the representatives of a western State. It is a conservative State; it is the one which gave the largest majority of any one in the North for President. I know that it is the feeling of the people of Indiana that the interests and rights of the South should never be trodden under foot. We do not intend to surrender any of our rights, and we do not believe that the people of the South desire to trespass upon our rights; if they did, we should rise up as one man to resist it, and we would resist it to the last. While we shall be careful to protect our rights, we shall be equally careful not to trespass upon the rights of our brethren in other States. Upon such broad, national grounds as this we can all stand; and if we do, this confederacy will continue increasing in prosperity and glory. We must discard all these sectional ideas. We must cultivate a greater feeling of respect and sympathy for each other, and for those of different sections; and I trust and hope this is the dawn of a new era. I trust and hope we shall hear no more of these

sectional agitations. Every good man and lover of this country ought to set his face against them. I speak the sentiment of the entire Democracy of my State when I say that we will do battle faithfully to protect the rights of the people of every portion of the confederacy, and that we shall stand by the Constitution and the Union to the last."

The "English Bill" was never exactly as its author would have had it. In a speech made some time after its passage, Mr. English says: —

"It was not to be expected that a bill upon a subject of so much magnitude, preceded by such intense excitement, long and heated debates, close votes, and conflicts between co-ordinate branches of the Government, could be enacted into a law in a manner satisfactory to all, or without violent opposition. Nothing in man's nature, or the history of the past, warranted such expectation. Thirty millions of excited people are not easily quieted, and a question which could agitate a whole nation was not likely to be removed without a struggle and some sacrifice of opinion.

"These things will all be considered by those who are disposed to judge fairly. Wise and patriotic men could well approve of a measure, originating under such circumstances, which they would have objected to as an original proposition. I am free to say, that if the bill had been an original proposition, depending alone upon my approval to shape into a law, I should, without sacrificing its substance, have changed in some respects some of its provisions. It was no time, however, to cavil about non-essential points, or unimportant words; no time to manifest a captious or dogmatical disposition. A little might well be yielded to the judgment of others, if necessary to achieve a successful result in a matter of such importance.

"Perfection in every respect was not claimed for the conference bill. Its friends set up no unreasonable or extravagant pretensions in its behalf, and they now have the proud satisfaction of knowing that it has realized all they ever claimed for it. It was enough that it contained the substance, and was the very best that could be secured at the time and under the circumstances which then existed.

"In that spirit it was agreed to in committee; in that spirit enacted into a law. It sprang from the necessity of the case, and was supported in the hope of reconciliation and peace. If those who gave it their support erred, it was in yielding too much in the praiseworthy effort of removing a dangerous question from the national councils and restoring harmony to a highly excited people."

Under this law, the question of admission under the Lecompton Constitution was, in effect, referred back to the people of Kansas, and they voted against it, as was expected.

Thus the result was accomplished which Mr. English had contended for from the beginning, and there is no inconsistency in his record upon this subject. On the final vote which admitted Kansas as a State, he was still a member, and voted for her admission.

CHAPTER III.

Two Notable Contests for Speakership. — Letter from President Buchanan. — Refusing Political Honors. — Elected to Congress the Fourth Time. — The Shadow of the Civil War. — Mr. English's Position. — His Speech to the Southern Members. — Retirement from Public Life. — Founder of the First National Bank of Indianapolis. — During the Panic of 1873. — Views on the Money Question.

THERE were two notable contests for the speakership during Mr. English's service in Congress, which are likely to live in history. The first was at the beginning of the Thirty-fourth Congress, when the Know-Nothing party held a small balance of power, and which, after a fierce and protracted struggle, resulted in the election of N. P. Banks.

The second one took place at the beginning of the Thirty-sixth Congress, when John Sherman was nominated by the Republicans for speaker; and, after two months, Governor Pennington was finally elected.

One extract from a speech made by Mr. English at this time should be preserved, since it refers to his political career. He said: —

"Those who are acquainted with my personal and political history know that I have never belonged to, or sympathized with, any other than the Democratic party. I have stood with that party against all the political organizations that have from time to time been arrayed against it. When the old Whig party existed, I opposed it upon those issues which

have become obsolete, and are no longer before the country. Upon the great question of slavery, which is the vital question of this day, I stand where the Democracy stood, and the Whig party stood, as long as the Whig party had an existence.

"Upon the advent of the Know-Nothing or American party, I opposed it persistently, and particularly the peculiar doctrines of that party in relation to naturalization and religion. My views upon these subjects have undergone no change. I am for our naturalization laws as they stand, and for the entire freedom of religious belief; and would resist, to the last, any infringement upon the one or the other."

In the ensuing political campaign, after the passage of the "English Bill," Mr. English was again nominated for Congress; and the contest in his district assumed a national importance. President Buchanan wrote him many letters of encouragement, and in one he said: —

"I omit no opportunity of expressing my opinion of how much the country owes you for the English amendment. Having lost the bill of the Senate, which I preferred, the country would have been in a sad condition, had it not been relieved by your measure. It is painful even to think of what would have been the alarming condition of the Union, had Congress adjourned without passing your amendment. I trust you will have no difficulty in being renominated and re-elected. If I had a thousand votes, you should have them all with a hearty good will."

It was after the passage of the "English Bill" that the President offered to confer the highest political honors upon Mr. English; but he declined to receive

any executive appointment. The same offer of favors was made by President Johnson. In the former case, Mr. English felt that his acceptance might be misunderstood; and he preferred remaining an independent representative of the people.

The election of 1858 resulted in the return of Mr. English to Congress by a larger majority than ever. There had been no change in the boundaries of his district; but his career in this, as in everything else, had been upward and onward, his majority gradually increasing at each election, from 488 in 1852 to 1,812 in 1858, and this at a time when Democratic congressmen were almost swept out of existence in the Northern States.

In the meantime, the shadows of the great civil war began to deepen, and Mr. English was a member of the national campaign committee. The approaching Democratic Convention at Charleston, S. C., was such an event as the nation looked forward to with anxiety. Mr. English went to Charleston, not as a delegate, but as a peace-maker; and, if his advice, and the advice of such prudent and practical men as he, had been followed, there would have been but one Democratic Presidential ticket, and such a conservative, patriotic platform as would probably have been successful.

Mr. English's labors in the behalf of harmony and of the safety of the country were in vain; and he returned to Washington greatly discouraged. In Congress, just before the breaking up at Charleston, and when public feeling was at its height, Mr. English made a great speech, full of wisdom and of sadness. He commenced by saying: —

"If I were to speak upon the topics which seem to be absorbing the attention of everybody now, it would be upon the scenes that have been enacted, and the events which are transpiring, at Charleston.

"I may be permitted to say, sir, upon this subject of the Presidency, that I have but little sympathy with those who imperiously demand 'Cæsar or nobody;' no sympathy with that rule-or-ruin spirit which has been exhibited too much of late in both wings of the Democratic party, and to which may justly be attributed whatever difficulties now exist.

"I shall not attempt, on the present occasion, to characterize this rule-or-ruin spirit in that language I conceive it so justly merits; but I venture to predict that, if disaster or serious trouble ensues, the masses of the Democratic party never will forgive, as they never ought to forgive, those who will have needlessly precipitated this state of affairs upon the country.

"It is not to be denied that, just at this time, dark and ominous clouds seem to be 'lowering over our house;' but I have an abiding faith that these clouds will soon break away, and leave the glorious sun of Democracy shining brightly as ever.

"Sir, mere political storms have no terror for me or for the great party to which I belong; and, for the present, I shall go upon the supposition that whatever storms may have prevailed at Charleston were necessary for the purity and healthfulness of the political atmosphere, as natural storms are known to be for a like purpose in the physical world."

When the movement on the part of the South for dissolution came, Mr. English was for pacification if possible, and favored every measure tending to that result.

In a speech in the House, he told the South, that

"the great Democratic party, that has so long and so justly boasted of its nationality, must not degenerate into a mere Southern sectional party, or a party that tolerates the sentiment of disunion; if it does, its days are numbered and its mission ended."

In alluding to the folly of the South in attempting to break up the Union, because of the election of a sectional man to the President's chair, he told them that not even a corporal's guard of Northern men would go with them out of the Union for such a cause, and that his constituents would only "march under the flag, and keep step to the music of the Union." Then pointedly addressing the Southern members, he said:—

"Looking at this matter from the particular stand-point you occupy, it is to be feared you have not always properly appreciated the position of the Free-State Democracy, or the perils which would environ them in the event of a resort to the extreme measures to which I refer. Would you expect us in such an event to go with you out of the Union? If so, let me tell you frankly, your expectations will never be realized. Collectively, as States, it would be impossible, and as individuals, inadmissible; because it would involve innumerable sacrifices, and a severance of those sacred ties which bind every man to his own immediate country, and which, as patriots, we never would surrender."

The crisis of the great American conflict came, despite all his efforts, and he resolved to retire from political life, having served four continuous terms. The convention which nominated his successor, adopted the following resolution:—

Resolved, That in selecting a candidate to represent this district in the Thirty-seventh Congress, we deem it a proper occasion to express the respect and esteem we entertain for our present member, Hon. W. H. English, and our confidence in him as a public officer. In his retirement, in accordance with his well-known wishes, from the position of representative, which he has long filled with credit to himself and benefit to the country, we heartily greet him with the plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

After his retirement Mr. English was offered the command of a regiment by Governor Morton; but he declined. He took no active part in the war, though he was a firm and consistent supporter of the Union cause. The Madison "Courier," a paper of opposite political views from Mr. English, gives the following account of a speech made by him:—

"Mr. English spoke for over an hour. He said that he had informed Southern men more than a year ago, in a speech in Congress, that he disapproved of secession *in toto*, and that it could never have his countenance and support. It was also well known that he was opposed to the Republican doctrines, and should boldly assail Mr. Lincoln's policy whenever he thought it wrong; but as a native of Indiana, thoroughly identified with Free-State interests, he felt that his allegiance was exclusively due to the State of Indiana and Government of the United States, and he should accordingly abide in good faith by their laws, and stand under the old time-honored flag.

"He trusted that the bitter cup of civil war might be passed from our lips, and he would exhaust every possible means of maintaining the peace; but if nothing will do but war, then we must all stand or fall together."

In the spring of 1863, Mr. English removed to Indianapolis, and there founded the First National Bank of Indianapolis, which was among the first organized in the United States under the National system, and the very first to get out its circulation.

A convention of bankers from all parts of the United States was held in the spring of 1876, and Mr. English was chosen as one of the committee to appear before and address a committee of Congress upon certain matters of finance.

For more than fourteen years Mr. English presided over the bank he had founded, with remarkable ability and fidelity; but on the 25th of July, 1877, he resigned, having become so much broken down in health that it was necessary for him to go to a warmer climate. The stockholders and directors accepted his resignation with deep regret, and adopted the following resolutions:—

Resolved, That the directors and stockholders of this bank sincerely regret the causes which impel the resignation of the Hon. William H. English, so long president of this institution, and that in accepting the same they desire to express their thanks to him for the very great financial ability, constant watchfulness, and perfect fidelity with which he has managed it from its organization to the present time.

Resolved, That the executive committee of the board be directed to have prepared, and present to him a suitable testimonial as a memento of our personal regard and esteem, and that he carry with him our most sincere wishes for a long life of usefulness and happiness.

In pursuance of the latter resolution there was

presented to Mr. English a magnificent gold medal, with profuse symbolical ornaments in the highest style of art, bearing on the one side the words, "Fortitude, Strength, Fidelity," and on the reverse the following inscription: — "Presented to Hon. Wm. H. English, founder, and over fourteen years President of the First National Bank of Indianapolis, as a memento of the personal esteem of the Stockholders and Directors, and their high appreciation of his very great financial ability, constant watchfulness, and perfect fidelity, July 23, 1877."

Soon after Mr. English retired from the bank he sold out his stock and now does not own a dollar of stock in any corporation.

During the financial panic of 1873 he did very much to prevent disaster to the Indianapolis banks; and the leading newspaper, "The People," said of him at that time: —

"His conduct throughout the panic proved that his heart was in the right place; that the best interests of the city were in his thoughts; that he had the nerve and the will to sink self, and proffer aid to those needing it."

Mr. English has always been a fearless advocate of honest money, and his views on the subject can best be explained in his own words, spoken at a recent interview: —

"For myself, I want our money to rank with the same standard recognized by all the great commercial nations of the world. I want no depreciated or irredeemable paper

forced upon our people. I want the laboring man, when pay-day comes, to be paid in real dollars, that will purchase just as much of the necessaries of life as the dollars paid to bondholders or office-holders, and with as great purchasing powers as the best money in the best markets of the world. Honesty, in my judgment, is the best policy in finance and politics, as well as in morals generally, and if politicians would take half as much trouble to instruct and enlighten the masses that they do to take advantage of their supposed prejudices, it would be far better."

Even though Mr. English refused to accept any further office, he did not cease to take an interest in public affairs. He was a delegate to the State Convention in 1861, and in 1862 it was hoped that he would allow his name to be used as a candidate for Congress. In his published letter of refusal, he said : —

"It is perhaps superfluous for me to add that, as a private citizen, neither seeking nor desiring office, I shall exert whatever of influence I possess to maintain the Constitution and the Union and speedily suppress the Rebellion. We must not allow ourselves to be driven from correct principles by any amount of misrepresentation, or even persecution.

"I would say, let us firmly stand together under the old flag and in the old organization, fighting secessionism to the bitter end, assailing the administration wherever we conscientiously believe it to be in error, but upholding the Constitution and laws, and never losing sight of that great historical fact, which cannot be overcome by misrepresentation or abuse ; and that is, that under the rule of the Democracy the country grew to be one of the greatest nations of the earth, and as long as they held power the people of all the States were prosperous and happy."

In 1864 he was a delegate to the Congressional Convention that nominated Michael C. Kerr to Congress. He also advocated McClellan's claims to the Presidency, and it was he who introduced a resolution declaring, "that we are now, as we ever have been, unqualifiedly in favor of the union of the States, under the Constitution; and stand ready, as we have ever stood heretofore, to do everything that loyal and true citizens should do to maintain that union under the Constitution, and to hand it down to our children unimpaired as we received it from our fathers."

The business in which Mr. English was engaged continued to increase until it absorbed all his time, and he could give but little attention to political matters; but he was a firm friend and supporter of Governor Tilden, and presided at the meeting held at Indianapolis, ratifying the nomination of Tilden and Hendricks. Then he said: —

"It is known to you, fellow-citizens, that I have not of late years been an active participant in political affairs. Preferring the quiet pursuits of private life and intending not to be drawn into the turmoils of active politics, I nevertheless am not an indifferent spectator in this contest, and certainly do not forget the past. I do not forget that I was born a Democrat; was long an earnest, hard-working member of the party, always a firm believer in its great cardinal principles, and frequently a recipient of its favor at a time when such favors were to me of inestimable value. With such antecedents and a heart which I know is not incapable of gratitude, I could not be indifferent to the fate of this grand old party, and, although in bad health and shrinking from appearing as a participant in a public political meeting, I could not forego

the pressing call that was made upon me to preside upon this occasion; because I sincerely believe that the time has arrived when the welfare of the people demands thorough reform in the affairs of the general government, and that such reform can now only be certainly and effectively secured by the election of Tilden and Hendricks. But I do not wish it understood that I am here to-night in a mere partisan capacity, claiming that everything called Democratic must necessarily be good, and everything called Republican necessarily bad. On the contrary, I congratulate the Republican party upon having nominated good men for candidates at Cincinnati, and placing them upon a creditable platform, but I congratulate the Democratic party still more upon having nominated better men upon a better platform."

The Indiana Democracy felt, at the time of the St. Louis platform, considerable dissatisfaction because Mr. Hendricks had not been nominated for President, and because of the financial views of the platform. Mr. English's speech had a good effect, for he adroitly said:

"It was natural that in the excitement of the moment some Indiana Democrats should have felt dissatisfied; but most of those have become reconciled, and not only support the ticket now, but stand squarely upon the platform. The few who have not yet got on the platform will hurry to get on board before the lightning-express train of the Democracy is fairly under way, because they know that train is bound to come in ahead, and that it is dangerous to get on the platform when the cars are in motion. Never fear but all the boys will get on board in due season, for they are not going to be left behind in this grand Democratic march to victory.

"Even the camp-followers, the dodgers and the trimmers, who hang on the outskirts of the party, distracting its

counsels and marring its harmony by disparaging the platform for the sake of a little local popularity, will be clamoring to get upon it, as it becomes more and more evident it is going to be adopted by the people."

The financial trouble he managed with like sagacity:

"I contend there is nothing in the St. Louis platform upon the subject of the finances about which Democrats should differ. It favors the repeal of that clause of the act of Congress which fixes a certain day for the resumption of specie payments. It repudiates a changeable standard of values, and advocates that standard which is recognized in our own Constitution as well as by the whole civilized world. It proposes to secure to our own people real dollars that shall have as much purchasing power as the dollars of other nations. It secures to the farmer, the mechanic, and the laborer a dollar that will have as great a purchasing power as the dollar of the bondholder. It secures to the manufacturer and the man of business that reasonable degree of certainty as to the financial future which will enable him to make investments and engage in business with some intelligence and feeling of security, which he never can have with a changeable standard of values. It short, it but reaffirms the old and time-honored doctrine of the Democratic party in favor of a currency of specie and paper convertible into specie on demand. It is true the platform places the Democratic party fairly and squarely upon the road to specie payments; but it does not propose to accomplish it by such hasty and inconsiderate legislation as will be unnecessarily oppressive to creditors or injurious to business."

Mr. English lives in Indianapolis, in a fine residence, which fronts a beautiful circular park, known as the

"Governor's Circle," so called because originally designed as the site for the residence of the governor of the State.

He was married to Miss Emma Mardulia Jackson of Virginia, on Nov. 17, 1847, in the city of Baltimore, Md. His wife died Nov. 14, 1876. Two children were the issue of this marriage, a son and daughter. The son is the Hon. W. E. English, a young man of fine promise, now a member of the Indiana House of Representatives, being the third of the family in lineal descent who has occupied that position — father, son, and grandson. The daughter, Rosalind, is the wife of Dr. Willoughby Walling, an eminent physician of Louisville, Ky., and is the mother of two fine boy-babies, William English Walling and Willoughby George Walling.

This history of a successful and active life comprises the time up to the year 1877, when Mr. English, crowned with success in every undertaking, with a political and business record without a blemish, and at the very meridian of his powers, sought the retirement of private life. But in this retirement Mr. English was not unmindful of his country, nor neglectful of the interests of the Democratic party, whose principles he had espoused in his youth, and whose standard-bearer he had been in many a hotly-contested fight. Always a close observer of passing events, he continued to manifest his deep solicitude for the success of the Democratic party, and with his ripe experience was ever ready to aid it by his counsel.

CHAPTER IV.

The Democratic National Convention of 1880.—The Nomaintion of Hancock for President is followed by that of English for Vice-President.—He is Named by General Petus of Alabama.—Unanimously Nominated.—Mr. English's Speech of Acceptance.

On the 24th of June, the National Democratic Convention, in the third day of its session at Cincinnati, had nominated Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock for President, and the choice came upon the proper name to complete the ticket in such a way as to render even more certain the victory which the first name upon it assured. In this contingency there seemed to be but one opinion as to the proper candidate to add strength and honor to the nomination. The first State called upon the roll named William H. English of Indiana. This was Alabama. General Petus of that State mounted the platform, and spoke as follows:—

Mr. President: By the unanimous instructions of the delegates from Alabama, and by permission of the delegates from the State of Indiana, Alabama nominates William H. English of Indiana. We have had a glorious day to-day. The Federal army and the Confederate army have met on Mason and Dixon's line as one army.

Now there is another principle that ought not to be forgotten. You have had assurance from New York of the union of the Democracy there. We have heard from Connecticut. We have heard from New Hampshire. Now, gentlemen, aided by these fair women from the North, from

the East, from the West, and from the South, you have sung together here that grand old question :—

"Shall auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Shall friends all true be remembered not
In the days of auld lang syne?"

Where have we looked for true friends? Where have we had true friends? Where do we expect true friends? From the glorious State of Indiana.

The vote was unanimous for Mr. English as the roll was called; and when it came the turn of Indiana, Senator Voorhees arose and said: —

Mr. President, a single word. Indiana has not been an applicant for the second place upon this ticket, but is deeply grateful, penetrated by a sense of gratitude for the spontaneous expression of confidence in one of her ablest and most distinguished citizens, Mr. English. I would say to the Convention that Indiana has not had her place upon the Presidential ticket; but if Mr. English is placed upon that ticket, there will be placed there a native of that State of commanding capacity for affairs both public and private, and a man who was never defeated when his name was presented before the people for any position; nor will he be defeated now. I thank the States for their offer of this high position to him, and on the part of the delegation from Indiana, I ask to cast the vote of that State for Mr. English, her distinguished son.

The Iowa delegation announced its choice as that of Hon. R. M. Bishop; but with that exception, the only interruption to the continuous balloting was the eulo-

gies of Mr. English which followed with increasing fervor. When the end of the list was reached and Wisconsin was called, Mr. W. F. Vilas responded, taking the platform: —

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: I am deputed by the last State upon the list, but by no means the last in the devotion of her Democrats to the principles of the party, to express the great delight with which Wisconsin seconds the nomination of William H. English of Indiana. In the union of the great soldier-statesman of the Democratic party with the great statesman whose name is presented now for the second place on the ticket, we see the bond of harmony exemplified, and to illustrate which has been expressed as coming from the State of New York the banishment of all discord, and the suppression of all division — a radiant bow of promise for this happy land, stretching from Maine to Texas, from the North to the South. And when, in the coming election of November, the ballots of this free people shall at last place in office its men who shall restore peace and happiness to this hitherto distracted country, then the summer day of our prosperity will rise to its zenith, and like a reaper gathering his bountiful harvest, the American people will proceed in their career of happiness, freedom, and liberty. Then, again, as at the beginning of the great Republic and the beginning of the world, the sons of God will shout together for joy. Mr. President, the order of the Convention is now concluded. Might I not, in order, in taking advantage of this opportunity to relieve the Convention from further labor, move that the nomination of William H. English be made unanimous by acclamation?

It was so made unanimous, amid applause and congratulations.

The committee appointed to communicate to the candidates their official nomination met Mr. English at Governor's Island, New York, on the 13th of July, where he was the guest of General Hancock. After the nomination had been tendered the candidate for President, and had been accepted by him, the secretary of the committee read to Mr. English the following communication, which was signed by all the committee-men: —

Hon. William H. English:

Sir, — By direction of the National Democratic Convention, which assembled at Cincinnati on June 22 last, it becomes our pleasing duty to notify you that you have been unanimously nominated by that body to the office of Vice-President of the United States. Your large experience in affairs of government, your able discharge of many trusts committed to your hands, your steadfast devotion to Democratic principles, and the uprightness of your private character, gave assurances to the Democracy that you were worthy and well qualified to perform the duties of that high position, and commended you to them for the nomination which they conferred. While your personal qualities and your public services well merited this honor, the action of the Convention was no doubt designed not only to indicate their appreciation of yourself, but as well to testify their profound respect for the Democracy of Indiana, your native State, with whose struggles you have been so long identified, and whose glorious achievements you have shared. The Convention set forth its views, which are now before the people, in a series of resolutions, a copy of which we have the honor to present to you, and to which your attention is respectfully requested. It is our earnest hope that their

views may meet with your approbation, and that you will accept the nomination which is now tendered.

In reply to this communication, Mr. English said:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee: As a practical man of business, not much accustomed to indirect ways or circumlocution of speeches, I will say plainly, and in a very few words, that I accept the high trust you have tendered me, and will at an early day make a more formal acceptance in writing, in conformity with the usual custom in such cases. In doing this I fully realize the great responsibility of this position, the great turmoil and anxiety, the misrepresentation and abuse which are certain to follow. I understand that the resources and power of our political foes of the whole country are to be centred upon us in Indiana, my native State, in one of the earliest and probably the greatest battles of the campaign. It is an occasion calling for the performance of high patriotic duty, not to be declined for personal considerations, and I shall not disregard the unanimous voice of the representatives of the majority of the American people, which you represent here to-day. I need hardly say that I am deeply impressed with the action of the Convention, and profoundly gratified for the high honor conferred upon me; and I cannot doubt that under the favor of God and the people, the great cause we all have at heart will be successful. I thank you, gentlemen, for the very kind and considerate manner in which you have discharged your duties toward me on this occasion.

This concluded the formal action, which has made Hon. William H. English the candidate of the constitutional party for the second highest office in the gift of the people.

APPENDIX.

LETTER OF GEN. HANCOCK

ACCEPTING THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT.

GOVERNOR'S ISLAND,
NEW YORK CITY, July 29, 1880.

GENTLEMEN :— I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 13, 1880, apprising me formally of my nomination to the office of President of the United States by the National Democratic Convention, lately assembled in Cincinnati. I accept the nomination with grateful appreciation of the confidence reposed in me. The principles enunciated by the Convention are those I have cherished in the past, and shall endeavor to maintain in the future. The thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution of the United States, embodying the results of the war for the Union, are inviolable. If called to the Presidency, I should deem it my duty to resist, with all of my power, any attempt to impair or impede the full force and effect of the Constitution, which in every article, section, and amendment, is the supreme law of the land. The Constitution forms the basis of the government of the United States. The powers granted by it to the legislative, executive, and judicial departments, define and limit the authority of the general government. Powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, belong to the States respectively, or to the people. The General and State governments, each acting in its own sphere without trenching upon the lawful jurisdiction of the other, constitute the Union. This Union, comprising a general government with general

powers, and State governments with State powers for purposes local to the States, is a polity, the foundations of which were laid in the profoundest wisdom. This is the Union our fathers made, and which has been so respected abroad and so beneficent at home. Tried by blood and fire, it stands to-day a model form of free popular government; a political system which, rightly administered, has been, and will continue to be, the admiration of the world. May we not say, nearly in the words of Washington: "The unity of government, which constitutes us one people, is justly dear to us; it is the main pillar in the edifice of our real independence, the support of our peace, safety, and prosperity, and of that liberty we so highly prize, and intend at every hazard to preserve"?

But no form of government, however carefully devised, no principles, however sound, will protect the rights of the people unless the administration is faithful and efficient. It is a vital principle in our system that neither fraud nor force must be allowed to subvert the rights of the people. When fraud, violence, or incompetence controls, the noblest constitutions and wisest laws are useless. The bayonet is not a fit instrument for collecting the votes of freemen. It is only by a full vote, free ballot, and fair count, that the people can rule in fact, as required by the theory of our government. Take this foundation away and the whole structure falls.

Public office is a trust, not a bounty bestowed upon the holder. No incompetent or dishonest persons should ever be entrusted with it, or, if appointed, they should be promptly ejected. The basis of a substantial, practical civil-service reform must first be established by the people in filling the elective offices. If they fix a high standard of qualifications for office, and sternly reject the corrupt and incompetent, the result will be decisive in governing the action of the servants whom they entrust with the appointing power.

The war for the Union was successfully closed more than fifteen years ago. All classes of our people must share alike in the blessings of the Union, and are equally concerned in its perpetuity and in the proper administration of public affairs. We are in a state of profound peace. Henceforth let it be our purpose to cultivate sentiments of friendship, and not of animosity, among our fellow-citizens. Our material interests, varied and progressive, demand our constant and united efforts. A sedulous and scrupulous care of the public credit, together with a wise and economical management of our governmental expenditures, should be maintained, in order that labor may be lightly burdened and that all persons may be protected in their rights to the fruits of their own industry. The time has come to enjoy the substantial benefits of reconciliation. As one people we have common interests. Let us encourage the harmony and generous rivalry among our own industries which will revive our languishing merchant marine, extend our commerce with foreign nations, assist our merchants, manufacturers, and producers to develop our vast natural resources, and increase the prosperity and happiness of our people.

If elected, I shall, with the Divine favor, labor with what ability I possess to discharge my duties with fidelity, according to my convictions, and shall take care to protect and defend the Union, and to see that the laws be faithfully and equally executed in all parts of the country alike. I will assume the responsibility, fully sensible of the fact that to administer rightly the functions of government is to discharge the most sacred duty that can devolve upon an American citizen.

I am, respectfully yours,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

To the Hon. JOHN W. STEVENSON, President of the Convention; Hon. JOHN P. STOCKTON, Chairman; and others of the Committee of the National Democratic Convention.

LETTER OF HON. WILLIAM H. ENGLISH

ACCEPTING THE NOMINATION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., July 30, 1880.

GENTLEMEN:—I have now the honor to reply to your letter of the 13th inst., informing me that I was unanimously nominated for the office of Vice-President of the United States by the late Democratic National Convention which assembled at Cincinnati. As foreshadowed in the verbal remarks made by me at the time of the delivery of your letter, I have now to say that I accept the high trust, with a realizing sense of its responsibility, and am profoundly grateful for the honor conferred. I accept the nomination upon the platform of principles adopted by the Convention, which I cordially approve; and I accept it as much because of my faith in the wisdom and patriotism of the great statesman and soldier nominated on the same ticket for President of the United States. His eminent services to his country; his fidelity to the Constitution, the Union and the laws; his clear perception of the correct principles of government as taught by Jefferson; his scrupulous care to keep the military in strict subordination to the civil authorities; his high regard for civil liberty, personal rights, and the rights of property; his acknowledged ability in civil as well as military affairs; and his pure and blameless life, all point to him as a man worthy of the confidence of the people; not only a brave soldier, a great commander, a statesman and a pure patriot, but a prudent, painstaking, practical man, of unquestioned honesty; trusted often with important public duties, faithful to every trust, and in the full meridian of ripe and vigorous manhood, he is, in my

judgment, eminently fitted for the highest office on earth,—the Presidency of the United States. Not only is he the right man for the place, but the time has come when the best interests of the country require that the party which has monopolized the executive department for the last twenty years should be retired. The continuance of that party in power four years longer would not be beneficial to the public or in accordance with the spirit of our republican institutions. Laws of entail have not been favored by our system of government. The perpetuation of property or place in one family or set of men has never been encouraged in this country, and the great and good men who formed our republican government and its traditions wisely limited the terms of office and in many ways showed their disapproval of long leases of power. Twenty years of continuous power is long enough, and has already led to irregularities and corruptions which are not likely to be properly exposed under the same party that perpetrated them; besides, it should not be forgotten that the four last years of power held by that party were procured by discreditable means, and held in defiance of the wishes of a majority of the people. It was a grievous wrong to every voter and to our system of self-government, which should not be forgotten or forgiven. Many of the men now in office were put in because of corrupt partisan services in thus defeating the fairly and legally expressed will of the majority, and the hypocrisy of the professions of that party in favor of civil-service reform was shown in placing such men in office and turning the whole brood of federal office-holders loose to influence the elections. The money of the people, taken out of the public treasury by these men for services often poorly performed, or not performed at all, is being used in vast sums, with the knowledge and presumed sanction of the administration, to control elections; and even the members of the Cabinet are strolling about the country making partisan speeches instead of

being in their departments at Washington discharging the public duties for which they are paid by the people. But with all their cleverness and ability, a discriminating public will, no doubt, read between the lines of their speeches that their paramount hope and aim is, to keep themselves and their satellites four years longer in office. That perpetuating the power of chronic federal office-holders four years longer will not benefit the men and women who hold no office, but earn their daily bread by honesty and industry, is what the same discerning public will, no doubt, fully understand; as they will also, that it is because of their own industry and economy and God's bountiful harvests that the country is comparatively prosperous, and not because of anything done by these federal office-holders. The country is comparatively prosperous, not because of them, but in spite of them. This contest is, in fact, between the people endeavoring to regain the political power which rightfully belongs to them, and to restore the pure, simple, economical, constitutional government of our fathers on the one side, and a hundred thousand federal office-holders and their backers, pampered with place and power, and determined to retain them at all hazards, on the other. Hence the constant assumption of new and dangerous powers by the general government, under the rule of the Republican party. The effort to build up what they call a strong government, the interference with home rule and with the administration of justice in the courts of the several States, the interference with the elections through the medium of paid partisan federal office-holders, interested in keeping their party in power, and caring more for that than fairness in the elections; in fact, the constant encroachments which have been made by that party upon the clearly reserved rights of the people and the States, will, if not checked, subvert the liberties of the people and the government of limited powers created by the fathers, and end in a

great consolidated central government, strong indeed for evil, and the overthrow of republican institutions. The wise men who formed our Constitution knew the evils of a strong government, and the long continuance of political power in the same hands. They knew there was a tendency in this direction in all governments, and consequent danger to republican institutions from that cause, and took pains to guard against it. The machinery of a strong centralized general government can be used to perpetuate the same set of men in power from term to term, until it ceases to be a republic, or is such only in name; and the tendency of the party now in power in that direction, as shown in various ways besides the willingness of a large number of that party to elect a President an unlimited number of terms, is quite apparent, and must satisfy thinking people that the time has come when it will be safest and best for that party to be retired.

But in resisting the encroachments of the general government upon the reserved rights of the people and the States, I wish to be distinctly understood as favoring the proper exercise by the general government of the powers rightfully belonging to it under the Constitution. Encroachments upon the constitutional rights of the general government, or interference with the proper exercise of its powers, must be carefully avoided. The union of States under the Constitution must be maintained; and it is well known that this has always been the position of both the candidates on the Democratic Presidential ticket. It is acquiesced in everywhere now, and finally and forever settled as one of the results of the war. It is certain, beyond all question, that the legitimate results of the war for the Union will not be overthrown or impaired should the Democratic ticket be elected. In that event, proper protection will be given in every legitimate way to every citizen, native or adopted, in every section of the republic, in the enjoyment of all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and its amendments.

A sound currency of honest money, of a value and purchasing power corresponding substantially with the standard recognized by the commercial world, and consisting of gold and silver and paper convertible into coin, will be maintained. The labor and manufacturing, commercial and business interests of the country will be favored and encouraged in every legitimate way. The toiling millions of our people will be protected from the destructive competition of the Chinese; and to that end their immigration to our shores will be properly restricted. The public credit will be scrupulously maintained and strengthened by rigid economy in public expenditures; and the liberties of the people and the property of the people will be protected by a government of law and order, administered strictly in the interests of all the people, and not of corporations and privileged classes.

I do not doubt the discriminating justice of the people and their capacity for intelligent self-government, and therefore do not doubt the success of the Democratic ticket. Its success would bury beyond resurrection the sectional jealousies and hatreds which have so long been the chief stock in trade of pestiferous demagogues; and in no other way can this be so effectually accomplished. It would restore harmony and good feeling between all the sections, and make us in fact, as well as in name, one people. The only rivalry then would be in the race for the development of material prosperity, the elevation of labor, the enlargement of human rights, the promotion of education, morality, religion, liberty, order, and all that would tend to make us the foremost nation of the earth in the grand march of human progress.

I am, with great respect,

Very truly yours,

WILLIAM H. ENGLISH.

To the Hon. JOHN W. STEVENSON, President of the Convention; the Hon. JOHN P. STOCKTON, Chairman; and other members of the Committee of Notification.

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